



# Year 9 Newsletter

September 2010

## WELCOME BACK NEWSLETTER

Dear Parents

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all students back after what was hopefully a relaxing and enjoyable break.

### Curriculum for Year 9

The Year 9 Parents' Evening will be held on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February and pupils will make their GCSE option choices shortly after this. There will be option booklets, presentations in lessons and assemblies by Heads of Departments and taster lessons. Curriculum developments in Year 9 include -

**Modern Foreign Languages** - The high levels of achievement at KS3 enable us to offer all Year 9 students the opportunity to take a GCSE in their first Modern Foreign Language early. Students will begin GCSE preparation in Year 9 and we expect almost all will want to take the GCSE in their first Modern Foreign Language at the end of Year 10. They will then have the option of improving their grade in Year 11. The large numbers that we expect to achieve A\* at their first attempt will begin KS5 work at the end of Year 10 with the option of gaining an extra AS qualification in Year 11. Please contact Mr Frost (Head of Modern Languages), Mrs Treppass (French) or Mr Costar (German) for further clarification.

We are delighted to announce that letters have already been sent home to all students regarding the annual Modern Foreign Language trips for next year. Students of French Modern Foreign Language 1 have the opportunity to visit St Malo, Brittany and students of German Modern Foreign Language 1, the Rhineland. The trips will take place next year during the week 19<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2011. By then exams will be over and the time will be right for a trip to enjoy the target language country and its culture at first hand.

For both trips pupils spend the days together, exploring the region as a group with their teachers and visiting sights of local interest. In the evenings, pupils stay in small groups of two or three with local host families to give them a taste of French or German family life that no other type of trip can match. We have been overwhelmed by the level of interest shown by students so far and would encourage them to hand in their deposits, along with a copy of their passport and EHICard details as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

**Science** - All students will sit the Triple Science award on the OCR Gateway course. They will begin their GCSE core syllabus in Year 9. In Year 10 they will study additional Science and in Year 11 the separate Sciences. Again you may wish to speak to Mrs Vialls (Head of Science).

**Mathematics** – Mr Shackleton (Head of Mathematics) sees no distinct difference between KS3 and KS4 – students should progress according to their own ability. They are already set and will be reset at the start of Year 9 using examination, assessments and teacher judgement. If appropriate approximately 50% of students will sit their GCSE at the end of Year 10. If so – they will study Additional Mathematics in Year 11 as a suitable preparation for A level or IB.

**Design Technology** – This year for the first time, Year 9 students will have one teacher (rather than a Carousel) – to teach them Food Technology, Resistant Materials, Textiles and Electronics (with a Graphics element throughout). They will be able to opt for GCSE Food Technology, Textiles or Product Design in Year 10. Again if you have any queries, please discuss them with Miss Peach (Head of Art, Design & Technology).

**RS** – Faith, Belief, Culture & Society (FBCS) will be taught as Religious Studies in Year 9 – full information will follow. Students will study the new Bexley Grammar School Diploma in Religious Studies. They will continue to develop their knowledge of major faiths and moral issues and build a school-assessed portfolio at pre-GCSE standards in Year 9. They will all take a full Religious Studies GCSE with Unit 2 in Year 10 and Unit 3 in Year 11.

**Leadership** – This year the Year 9s will all have the opportunity to study Leadership as a curriculum subject. This will explore several ideas about how people work together and will allow students to develop their skills in teamwork, problem solving, communication and management of others. The skills and theories that they learn in this unique course will be useful to them throughout their school life and in any career they take on thereafter.

Students will continue preparation and development in content and skills in their **other curriculum subjects** before starting GCSEs in Year 10.

Once again, I hope that you had a pleasant summer, and I look forward to a successful year.

Yours sincerely

**PA Johnson**  
**Director of Studies, Year 9**