



December 2010

**RICHMOND  
SCHOOL**  
*& Sixth Form College*

Dear Parents/Guardians

**Curriculum changes 2011**

I am writing to inform you about changes that will be introduced to start in September 2011 for Year 8 and Year 9 students.

The changes have been prompted by a number of factors, firstly, the fact that students do not sit end of Key Stage Three Tests. This now allows us to be more flexible in how we plan a student's personal curriculum and offer a wider choice of subjects and styles of courses. Secondly, in an ever increasingly competitive world, we need to maximise student performance in the GCSE, or equivalent, examinations. We believe that the curriculum changes we plan to make will improve motivation and an individual's success in examination courses.

We aim to put in place a new curriculum which will offer the following benefits:

- It will allow all students more choice of subjects at GCSE and other qualifications.
- It will allow all students to start GCSE's early; some GCSE's will now commence in Year 9, rather than in Year 10.
- The new curriculum will ensure that students who need extra help and extra time to achieve GCSE's in maths, English and science will get more time and support that they need.
- The new curriculum will also ensure that students have some qualifications by the end of Year 10, so that Year 11 can be spent on securing even higher grades in some subject areas. The curriculum model will allow us to reduce the number of examinations students have to concentrate on, as well as offering the possibility of enrichment, preparation for 'A' level, and for some, catching up and ensuring good passes in the core subjects.
- We feel that offering students choice of subjects and the possibility of gaining qualifications in Year 9 will remove the feeling of "dead time" waiting for the traditional Option and examination courses to start in Year 10.
- By developing a more flexible approach to our curriculum and timetable some GCSE's will be completed in one year and students can go on to choose new options for the final year.

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arts colleges



Science & Maths College



The current Year 8 and Year 9 students will be offered a different curriculum to that available previously. Although most of a student's curriculum will be compulsory and be broad in terms of the variety of subjects, Year 8 students, will be asked to choose some subjects and spend more time on fewer subjects. Some of these subjects will offer qualifications to be gained in Year 9; other subjects will prepare the students for the GCSE courses which will be chosen later.

Science and maths subjects will also start GCSE early, and English will start building the core skills needed for GCSE during Year 9. Year 9 will be offered a rich range of options for next year, along with a chance to progress at a pace suitable to their ability.

Our plans have gone through a thorough consultation process with governors and curriculum leaders within the school and at Local Authority level. There is very strong support to make these changes to ensure that Richmond School prepares our youngsters effectively for life beyond school.

We will be holding information evenings for parents on **Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm for Year 8** and **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm for Year 9** in the James Tate Building. It is important that parents attend as the choices system will be new especially for the parents of Year 8 students. At the meeting we can explain the process for making choices and also give you a chance to ask questions. Please return the slip below to indicate if you are able to attend (there is also an opportunity to submit a question in advance).

Please see the dates below for the dates for information and consultation evenings, to be held in the James Tate Building:

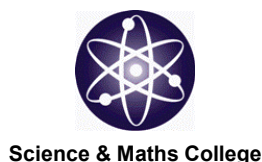
- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> Feb Year 9 parents' evening to meet subject teachers
- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> Feb Year 8 parents' information evening on Choices: 6.30pm
- Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> Feb Year 9 parents' information evening on Choices: 6.30pm
- Friday 17<sup>th</sup> Feb Year 8 and 9 Choices forms returned to school
- Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> and Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> Mar Year 9 Choices consultation and confirmation evening's appointments to be arranged on an individual basis.
- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March Year 8 parents' evening to meet subject teachers.
- Wed 16<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March Year 8 Choices consultation and confirmation evenings, appointments to be arranged on an individual basis.

Yours sincerely,



DS Clark  
Deputy Head teacher

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## YEAR 8 CURRICULUM CHANGES INFORMATION EVENING

**TUESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY (RETURN TO TUTOR)**

I/We are able to attend Year 8 Evening.

Number of seats required:.....

Student Name ..... Tutor Group .....

Question asked in advance:

✂.....

## YEAR 9 CURRICULUM CHANGES INFORMATION EVENING

**WEDNESDAY 9<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY (RETURN TO TUTOR)**

I/We are able to attend Year 9 Evening.

Number of seats required:.....

Student Name ..... Tutor Group .....

Question asked in advance:

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