



Dear Parent/ Carer,

06/06/14

Re: Year 9 Science Curriculum

I am writing to ensure that you are aware of the structure of the curriculum in year 9 in Science. We run two parallel courses in order to provide a curriculum that proves inspiring, challenging and successful for all of our students.

There will be 8 teaching groups of students and out of these:

- 5 groups will cover a range of topics at KS3 level including: Inheritance, Healthy Living, Photosynthesis, Reactivity of Metals, Acids and Bases, Environmental Chemistry, Energy, Speed and Pressure. These students will begin studying GCSE Science at the start of the summer term in year 9 and go on to take 2 GCSEs in Science (covering Biology, Chemistry and Physics). 'Core Science' is awarded at the end of year 10 with 'Additional Science' in year 11.
- 3 groups will begin working on separate GCSE Sciences at the start of year 9. As a result of starting their GCSE Science course early these students may go on to take 3 GCSEs in Science at the end of year 11 (separate GCSEs in Biology, Chemistry and Physics).

The national norm is that students take 2 GCSEs in Science and for many schools this is the only route that students are offered. Indeed, the timetable allocation for Science as a subject is that for two GCSEs. As such, this is suitable preparation for all A-level Sciences or University courses (i.e. achieving 2 as opposed to 3 Sciences at GCSE level could not disadvantage students for the future).

Teachers will make a recommendation for the best route for individual students based on a rounded view of their performance in years 7 and 8. The pace and nature of assessment of the KS4 courses are important factors for consideration. Separate Sciences are assessed terminally via 9 hours of exams at the end of year 11 whereas, as mentioned above, assessment of the 2 GCSEs is split over the 2 years. Both routes are graded from A*-U with higher and foundation papers available.

There is a degree of flexibility in the year 9 curriculum so if later assessments indicate that students would benefit through changing courses this will be feasible. You will receive a letter in the penultimate week of term confirming our recommendation for the curriculum pathway in year 9.

I hope the above provides a clear summary of the Science curriculum in year 9 but if you have any questions please feel free to contact me at school or via e-mail (baileys@fulford.york.sch.uk).

Yours faithfully,

Stephen Bailey (Curriculum leader - Science, Fulford School)

