



**Changing Lives
Learning Trust**

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**WEST LAKES
ACADEMY**

Changing Lives Through Learning

17th February 2023

Dear parent/carer,

I write with news of some exciting developments to our academic curriculum at West Lakes Academy.

For a number of years now, the academy has run a two year Key Stage 3 with students selecting their GCSE and BTEC options at the end of Year 8. From September 2023, this will change to a three year Key Stage 3, with students choosing their option subjects at the end of Year 9. This will mean that all students will study all of their subjects until the end of Year 9, and will start their GCSEs and BTEC qualifications in Year 10.

We have taken the decision to change our curriculum in this way because:

- A longer KS3 will enable students to study foundational knowledge and key concepts in greater depth. This will form firm foundations for their later learning in KS4 and 5.
- Students will be able to study a broader range of subjects for longer, helping to ensure that our curriculum builds the cultural capital that students will need to flourish in life beyond WLA.
- A further year of careers education, greater maturity and a better knowledge of individual subjects will help students to make better options choices that will support them with their long term futures.

I know from the recent parents' view survey that many of you are already in favour of these changes and I am grateful for your support.

In order to ensure that our new curriculum is ready for implementation in September, there will be two **additional INSET days during the summer term. These will take place on Friday 23rd June and Monday 10th July.** On both of these days, the academy will be closed to students and they will be set remote learning to complete instead. I apologise for the disruption that this may cause you and your family, but ensuring quality planning is in place in time for September will have a long-lasting benefit for your child.

What does this mean for my child?

If your child is already in Year 9 or 10 they have chosen their option subjects and will continue to study these as planned.

In addition, they will have computing lessons in their timetable from September. We have chosen to run this course as it is a fundamental requirement for many local and national employers and we feel our students deserve the best teaching we can give them in this important area so that they can be successful in the competitive employment market.

If your child is currently in Year 8, they will not choose between history and geography this year, but will go on to study both courses into Year 9.

Principal: Abby Deeks

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They will choose whether to study geography or history at GCSE at the end of Year 9 and will then complete a GCSE in one of these two subjects.

In the spring term this year, they will choose one arts subject to specialise in and one free option choice, both of which they will then study until the end of Year 11.

Your child should attend the options evening on Thursday 9th March to find out more about the options choices available to them this academic year.

If your child is currently in Year 7, they will continue to study all of the courses they currently follow until the end of Year 9, when they will select one humanities subject, one arts subject and one free choice to take through to GCSE.

How can I find out more?

There will be two School & Home Integrated Partnership (SHIP) meetings this term that will focus solely on the changes to the academic curriculum for next year. These will take place on:

- Wednesday 15th March at 4pm
- Wednesday 10th May at 4pm

I hope that you are able to attend one of these sessions. Please sign up for a place here: [here](https://forms.gle/DgiR24vr5v1gRM2Y6) (<https://forms.gle/DgiR24vr5v1gRM2Y6>)

I hope that you share our excitement about the new curriculum offer at West Lakes Academy. We will keep you updated of the changes to come over the coming weeks and months.

Yours faithfully



A Deeks
Principal

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