



Starbank School

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to you to let you know of the decision to move to a longer, three-year Key Stage 3 and a shortening of Key Stage 4 (GCSE) to 2 years. This will start on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021.

As a school we strive to do the best we can for the children at Starbank and give our pupils an advantage over their peers in other schools. As I am sure you can appreciate your child has lost much learning because of the global pandemic and missed skills and experiences which are necessary to help them succeed at GCSE. Additionally, we want to make sure that they have had a broad and balanced curriculum before starting their GCSEs. As you will appreciate this is not a simple decision but is one that we have been considering for some time. Now we believe the time is right to change to a three-year Key Stage 3.

#### **Why we believe that now is the time for change**

- As a school we monitor and review our curriculum annually to ensure that we offer an engaging, robust, and broad education to all our pupils.
- As part of this review process, we considered the latest thinking and educational research to inform our planning.
- The latest educational research highlights the benefits of giving students a broad and balanced curriculum for as long as possible before specialising at GCSE.
- Research suggests that by giving pupils more time to develop their knowledge and skills across a range of subjects at Key Stage 3 better equips them for the rigours at GCSE.
- Many schools around the country now are delivering a three-year Key Stage 3.

#### **What are our reasons for change?**

- This change will allow a greater period for students to consolidate their knowledge, skills, and passion at Key Stage 3 in preparation for the demands of GCSE.
- A three-year Key Stage 3 curriculum will help us ensure that our pupils are offered the best curriculum. Three years ensures that we have allocated enough time for our children to explore the core subject areas deeply enough to equip them with the foundational knowledge that is important for future success.
- Our aim is to instil a love of learning and passion for each subject. This change will allow pupils to have a deeper understanding of all the subjects.

**Starbank Road**  
Birmingham B10 9LR  
0121 464 2638

**Hob Moor Road**  
Birmingham B10 9BT  
0121 464 8412

**Bierton Road**  
Birmingham B25 8PY  
0121 464 0751

info@starbank.staracademies.org  
starbankschool.co.uk



Part of Star

### What will the changes mean?

- Key Stage 3 will now be Years 7, 8 & 9. Your child will continue to study the full breadth of subjects that we offer for longer and commence the GCSE curriculum in September 2022.
- The Year 9 curriculum will be re-written to ensure strong foundation for GCSE. Our monitoring of students' attainment will permit early identification where there are gaps in subject knowledge because of time missed in school. We are confident this approach will lead to better outcomes for pupils.
- As we are changing our curriculum from November 2021 this means your child will postpone studying their Options until next year and can look forward to the additional time to explore the full curriculum for the rest of Year. ***Should your child wish to change their options we will discuss this towards the end of this academic year.***
- This change will not reduce the breadth of qualifications being offered at GCSE. We shall be letting pupils know of this change by assembly so that they understand how this will affect them.

We firmly believe that lengthening Key Stage 3 is the right and proper course of action and this will happen from November 2021.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with me at the school.

Yours Faithfully,



Gaetano Ferrante

(Principal)