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ROYAL  
ALEXANDRA  
& ALBERT  
SCHOOL



### General Setting Information

*\* New in-year entrants will be placed in the highest set available, unless we have prior information that dictates otherwise. Any movement in sets will then take place at the earliest time that is in line with the individual department's policy.*

*\*Heads of Department do move children at various points during the year. The main priority for setting is ensuring that a student is in a set where they can maximise their potential. Set changes are not necessarily communicated to parents.*

*\*Heads of School do also change students between different year group bands; this can have an impact on the student's tutor group. This decision is made based on the Head of School's knowledge about where a student is most likely to succeed. Changes to tutor groups are not necessarily communicated to parents.*

### SET CHANGE PROTOCOL IN ENGLISH

At the beginning of year 7, students are taught in tutor groups. During this time, they undertake a transition unit of work and conduct a series of exercises and tests that allow us to then set them based on their attainment.

In year 8 and year 9, students begin the year having had their sets determined the previous year, based on their attainment during the year. This involves a consideration of the half-termly key assessment tasks, the end of year exam and performance in Accelerated Reader activities.

While there is opportunity for students to move sets during the year due to rates of progress, this is done only after very careful consideration as changing sets also impacts other subjects that share the timetable block.

New students are initially placed in sets where there is availability and so that numbers are balanced, but might move at the end of a unit of work after the class teachers have had opportunities to assess them.

At the end of year 9, students are set according to their attainment over the course of the year and their end of year examination results for their classes in year 10. Class teachers are also consulted with how students have worked throughout the year. We consider a range of factors including effort, attitude to learning, relationships with staff and additional support that might be available the following year before allocating students to a class.

Irrespective of set, students follow the same unit of work and there are no examination tiers, which means that they all sit the same tests and exams. Each class has two teachers, one primarily for English Language and the other for English Literature; however, teachers may cover either Language or Literature units and revision depending on the needs of the class.

We do consider set changes during the course of the GCSE, especially at the end of units of work, but prefer having stable classes once effective working relationships have been established by students with staff and their peers.

### **SET CHANGE PROTOCOL IN MATHS**

Students are assessed at the end of each topic and then at the end of the year. New students including year 7 students, are the exception to this. These students sit a numeracy test which determines the initial set.

The end of topic tests are used to judge progress and often do not lead to set changes unless a pattern of under or over achieving emerges. Set changes are managed between department colleagues and usually (but not always) in consultation with the student.

The end of year tests are designed to give an overall picture of attainment during the year, the results of which will then be used to inform set changes for the following September.

At Key Stage 4, the Mathematics department will decide on the tier of entry based on a combination of results from assessments and student target grades. The entry tier can be subject to change based on how students progress through Key Stage 4.

### **SET CHANGE PROTOCOL IN SCIENCE**

The Science department continually monitors all students' progress throughout the year through marking students' class work, prep work and end of unit assessments.

In year 7 and 8, students are taught in mixed ability classes. In year 9 and year 10 Combined Science, the mid-year analysis of students' progress may lead to some set changes. Throughout the year, the class teachers can recommend a student to the Head of Department for a set move to take place; the Head of Department will decide on an individual basis according to their level, attitude towards learning, prep and class work.

For year 10 separate students and year 11s, sets may only be changed from teacher recommendations to the Head of Department. Decisions regarding Science GCSE route and tiering are made at the following times:

- Science GCSE route of Separate or Combined Trilogy is decided at the end of year 9;
- GCSE tiers are decided after year 11 mocks.

For new students' decisions about sets will be made after one half term using KAT assessments completed.

*\*A note about new students joining Y10: Any external students who have accepted an offer to join at the start of year 10 and who want to be included in the separate Science decision will need to sit the year 9 end of year exam like our year 9 students. This can be completed at home but will need to be signed off by parents that it was done in exam conditions and handed in by Monday 1st June 2020. External applicants who accept an offer for Y10 after this date will not be considered for separate Science. Equally, students who join in Y11 will not be able to do separate Science.*

### **SET CHANGE PROTOCOL IN MFL**

The Modern Foreign Language department continually monitors all pupils' progress throughout the year through marking pupils' class work, prep work and end of unit assessments. The end of unit assessments happen during the last 2 weeks of each half term. These assessments are likely to lead to some set changes.

Furthermore, throughout the year, the class teachers can recommend a pupil to the Head of Department for a set move to take place; the Head of Department will decide on an individual basis according to their level, attitude towards learning, prep and class work.

The Head of Languages, with the advice of the class teachers, will decide at the end of year 8 which students carry on with French, Spanish or both languages in year 9. This will depend on students' performance in the end of the Year 8 assessment week and the general attitude and effort put in lessons throughout y7 and y8.