



Midhurst Rother College

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Part of United Learning

5 July 2023

Dear Parent / Carer

I write to update you regarding some changes we will make to tutor time for the current Year 10 students when they move to Year 11. In academic terms, my view is that this year group was the most affected by the pandemic, which started shortly after they arrived with us. They missed roughly half of year 7 and were not taught in specialist rooms, due to being in bubbles, followed by another lockdown in Year 8.

There will be no additional support from the examination boards for Year 11 next year. I am very pleased with the way the students are working in lessons – they deserve enormous credit for this and are doing well. Despite this, there are still some gaps in their knowledge which we are working to close as they approach their GCSEs this time next year.

I want to make sure we use the time we have with Year 10 as effectively as possible to support their academic progress and wellbeing. They will have PSHE lessons and assemblies to continue to promote and support the latter. For the former, we will make some changes to tutor time in the mornings, with the introduction of specialist 'masterclasses' which students will attend, according to their individual subject need, based on our internal assessments and knowledge of each child.

The masterclasses will run in tutor time and, as a result, students will need to change tutor groups – they will not have their current tutor next year. We will run 10 masterclass groups throughout the year, with the focus on: English (two groups), maths (1 higher and 1 foundation), science (1 triple, 1 higher and 1 foundation), history (1 group), geography (1 group) and MFL (1 group). The students will be placed in a masterclass group, which will change each half-term dependent on individual need and where gaps in knowledge are. As the students' progress, we will change the masterclass they will attend.

The tutor and masterclass programme for next year will broadly be the following:

Half-term 1-2: one assembly per week, two masterclass sessions, two 'normal' tutor sessions

Half-terms 3-5: one assembly per week, three masterclass sessions, one tutor session.

In structuring the programme this way, students still receive assemblies and tutor sessions based on spiritual, moral, social and community education, encapsulating our values. The masterclass programme also gives all students more time to improve and embed knowledge for their GCSEs.

This decision to change the current system has not been taken lightly and has been discussed and agreed with the Local Governing Body and United Learning. I hope you agree that we are seeking to improve the students' opportunities for success next summer, whilst also protecting their wellbeing.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Edwards
Principal

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