



EXCELLENCE • LEARNING • LEADERSHIP

ST JOHN'S SCHOOL

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SJS/EB

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

It has come to my attention that there may be some questions regarding setting in Year 7. I am thus writing to you to clarify the process.

Like previous years, the majority of Year 7 classes at St John's School are mixed ability. This is particularly the case for subjects not tested in primary school and which may be new to students, such as languages and technology. Extensive educational research* suggests that teaching students in mixed ability groups leads to quicker progress, especially for the least able and middle students as they are likely to be exposed to more challenging work. Equally, research** shows that the best way to embed learning is to teach your knowledge and skill to someone else: the more able thus also get the opportunity to progress further.

This year, we are trialling mixed ability with three more subjects in Year 7, English, Science and ICT, as part of our curriculum development which aims to set even higher expectations for all students. Our curriculum is firmly rooted in our core values – excellence, learning, leadership – and I will write to you again when our new curriculum intent has been agreed. Through a parent survey, I will also ask for your views on our curriculum later in the year as part of our self-evaluation cycle.

The only subject which is set in Year 7 is Maths. Sets are based on Key Stage 2 data initially but are flexible throughout the year to respond to regular test outcomes and lesson observations. If your child is to move set, this should be communicated to you by the class teacher or the head of faculty, John Dunbar.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding setting or our curriculum, please do not hesitate to contact us by email, phone or through one of your parent SGC representatives – details of which can be found on our school website.

Yours faithfully,

Emma Bryson
Headteacher

* *Visible Learning*, John Hattie, 2009

** *Brilliant: The New Science of Smart*, Annie Murphy Paul, 2017

