

Our Ref: RBR/ANO/SHA/FSC2111

Wednesday 21st November 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

Change of GCSE Music Qualification

Your child has been studying GCSE Music now for just over a year. Recently, the school and the Music department have been completing a thorough review of the courses we offer in the light of the curriculum changes introduced by the government and the exam results and progress checks we complete with our students.

It is clear that the changes to the GCSE Music specifications have made this qualification far more difficult to complete and achieve the highest grades. Our data analysis has demonstrated clearly that students of a similar ability and attitude to learning will achieve significantly higher grades following the BTEC Music Level 2 qualification rather than GCSE Music.

We have thoroughly looked at the content of the GCSE Music course and the BTEC Music Level 2 course, which are both comparatively very similar and so students will not be at a disadvantage. Additionally, the BTEC specification allows students to sit the final exam earlier, which will create capacity for extra Maths and Science revision sessions. Furthermore, intervention sessions will be held to support students with their learning and to help them prepare for Music taught at a further education level. Therefore, with careful consideration, we have decided to switch qualifications to ensure that all of our students have the best chance of achieving the highest grades.

We anticipated that this might happen in the summer, so both the GCSE Music and BTEC Music Level 2 classes have been following similar lessons over the last ten weeks so that there would be minimal impact on the students if we decided to change course. As a result, your child's chances of achieving highly will not be affected by the change of course part way during the year. Baysgarth have been delivering the GCSE Music qualification for many years now and have a strong track record of achieving excellent outcomes in this area.

Some of you may have concerns that the BTEC Music Level 2 course might not be as 'academic' as the GCSE Music course or that it would not hold the same equivalence or kudos for students who want to go on and study this subject post-16. We can reassure you that this is not the case and that the BTEC Music Level 2 qualification is both rigorous and accepted by all post-16 providers and universities. The main difference is in the way the course is assessed rather than the content or the difficulty of the course.

If you have any questions about this change, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Hallett, Teacher of Music, at the school.

Yours faithfully



Richard Briggs
Head Teacher