



March 2019

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to inform you that we have decided to change our GCSE Product Design course to BTEC Engineering.

The new reformed GCSE courses have reduced the practical element and increased the written content within the exams. Currently, the GCSE is divided into 50% Exam and 50% Practical. We believe the BTEC course will give us the flexibility to provide a more engaging experience, with a greater practical element that will better prepare students for industry.

BTEC Engineering provides greater opportunity for our students to bank their learning and be continually assessed throughout the course. The externally examined element is practical based and students are allowed two opportunities. The plan is for students to have completed their examined element by Christmas, with a resit opportunity in March. This means they will have one fewer exam in May and June.

Within lessons Year 10 students will not notice much, if any, difference. The work completed so far this year supports the BTEC course. Students have been developing their practical skills across a range of materials and they will not be disadvantaged by the change.

BTEC courses are highly valued by employers and colleges as they provide a greater element of vocational training and allow students to develop their practical skills in response to realistic, real-world scenarios.

Each unit is individually graded across a 6 point scale:

- Level 1 Pass
- Level 1 Merit
- Level 1 Distinction
- Level 2 Pass
- Level 2 Merit
- Level 2 Distinction

When all units are completed students are given a final grade. Exceptional performance is rewarded with a Level 2 Distinction*.

Westfield has a well established track record of delivering BTECs and I am sure that making this change will allow our students to achieve their full potential.

If you wish to discuss this further please contact your child's teacher, either Mr Gilham or Mr Wright.

Yours faithfully

Mr Matthew Reid
Deputy Headteacher



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