



Thomas Alleyne's High School

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Dear Parent/Carer

Science Pathways at TAHS

It gives me great pleasure in welcoming your child to the Science Department at Thomas Alleyne's High School. We believe that every student should have access to an excellent science education and we are justifiably proud of the progress that students make while with us.

As is common in most schools, students are placed into sets for science based on their ability. We do this to ensure that lessons and classes are matched to their abilities so that all students are able to make excellent progress, receiving the support that they need to achieve their potential. We have worked closely with your child's current school to determine the most appropriate set for them when they start with us in year 9. These sets are reviewed throughout their time with us, to ensure that they are always in the best set for them at each point in their journey. It is quite common for students to move up and down sets over the course.

From year 10, students will follow one of two pathways in science. Students in sets 1 and 2 **at the start of year 10** will pursue three separate GCSE qualifications: GCSE Biology, GCSE Chemistry and GCSE Physics. This pathway is often referred to as 'Triple' or 'Separate' science and will involve additional science lessons in years 10 and 11 to cover additional content in each subject.

Students in sets 3-5 **at the start of year 10** will follow a double GCSE award: GCSE Combined Science which counts as two GCSEs. They will still study topics from biology, chemistry and physics, but the results from their exams will be added together to produce a combined grade for 'Science' rather than separate grades for 'Biology', 'Chemistry' and 'Physics'. As they cover slightly less content, they will have fewer science lessons in years 10 and 11. While each pathway has its merits, it is important to note that both pathways can potentially allow students to go onto any post-16 qualification or training of their choosing, including A-Levels in science. All students in year 9 have the same number of science lessons each fortnight, follow the same sequence of lessons and cover the same content irrespective of which set they are in.

I will be in touch again in spring to explain more about the GCSE science courses and how to support students through these. If you do have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me via the school office. We look forward to seeing your children start with us in September.

Best Wishes

Mr L Melland
Head of Science