

WIGMORE SCHOOL POLICY STATEMENT

Dropping and Changing KS4 Subjects

Unless there are exceptional circumstances (which are listed below) *the option of 'dropping subjects' does not exist*. Once a student has opted for a subject in KS4 they are committed to that subject for the duration of the key stage and must be entered for appropriate accredited certification at the end of the key stage. In most cases certification is for GCSE or equivalent Level One/Two qualification, as decided by the Subject Leader.

It is the responsibility of the teacher, under the direction and support of the Subject Leader, to ensure that the students are engaged in that subject for the whole of the key stage, and that they support the student to achieve their minimum target grade (or higher) in that subject at the end of the key stage. **'Not coping' or 'not enjoying' the subject does not justify the student dropping the subject.** If a student is not coping, or not enjoying a subject, the teacher has a responsibility to deal with this, supported, if necessary, by the Subject Leader. This includes lack of progress resulting from poor attendance. In the case of poor attendance, the teacher should alert the Subject Leader that they have a concern at an early stage before the problem escalates.

There are many strategies to deal with students that are not engaged and/or coping in a subject. Teachers must start by looking at their own teaching and strategies they use in the classroom. If normal classroom strategies and targeted intervention/support by the teacher do not work, then the normal referral process should be used i.e. referral by the teacher to the Subject Leader for higher level support, including contacting parents. If the problem persists, then the Subject Leader should seek the support of the relevant member of the senior leadership team, especially if the problem is caused by poor attendance.

If all the normal referral procedures have been followed, and a situation arises in which the Subject Leader feels the student cannot achieve at least a GCSE Grade 1 (for example because they have failed or refused to complete non exam assessments), then the Subject Leader should investigate alternative accreditation in their subject area. This ensures that disengaged students achieve a qualification in this subject area if the GCSE is not working for them.

Exceptions

There are two exceptions, which in exceptional circumstances could permit a student to drop a subject. In these situations, the student is, where possible, re-timetabled to a support group:

- **If a student has significant learning difficulties and is on the inclusion register (and usually has an EHCP):** In this case the Subject Leader should refer the issue to the senior leadership team, who will assess whether dropping the subject and re-timetabling for support studies is an option. The Headteacher will make the final decision.
- **If a student has significant emotional or health problems, which are affecting the student's ability to achieve in the subject:** In this case the Subject Leader should refer the issue to the senior leadership team, who will assess whether dropping the subject is an option and how to give alternative provision. Once the assessment is completed, the Headteacher will make the final decision.

Students are not allowed to change subjects in the option blocks after the first two full weeks of Year 10.

Even within the first two weeks a request to change a subject will be treated as an exceptional and unusual request and treated as such because any change of subject will require the student to work hard to catch up on work that they have missed in their new subject. Such requests will be managed by the Deputy Headteacher in charge of the options process. Approval will only be given if the student has a proven record of a good work ethic, which will enable him or her to catch up on work missed, and after the situation has been discussed with parents.

Person responsible for this policy statement	Deputy Headteacher
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