



Solihull School

1 July 2010

To Parents of All Fourth Form Pupils

Dear Parents

I am writing to you concerning the setting arrangements for the Lower Fifth Forms next year. The setting system has two main purposes. The first is to allow the setting of pupils according to their ability in the different 'core' subjects: English, Mathematics, French and the Sciences. The second is to allow a free choice of option subjects, rather than a system where subject combinations are limited.

In order to achieve these two aims, the GCSE years are divided into three 'columns'. The first column contains the top set (A1) in each of the core subjects, which will be determined by the Heads of Department of these subjects on the basis of the pupils' Fourth Form examination results and performance over the year. The top set will not be the same for all subjects, so those who are in column A, but not in the top set for a particular subject, will be in set A2 for that subject. The other two columns are parallel, with two sets in each column. Within each column, pupils will be in the first or second set, depending on their ability in the core subject; for example, a pupil could be in the first set for English, but the second set for Mathematics; the Science and Mathematics sets will be identical. Pupils are not setted for their option subjects.

We believe that our setting system gives us the best of both worlds and makes it easier for the appropriate assistance to be given to pupils of all academic levels. In particular, the sets B2 and C2 are smaller than the others, so that pupils get more attention. Although it is not possible to get every decision right, we do assure you that every effort is made to ensure pupils are placed in the sets that are appropriate to their ability. It should also be noted that it is possible for a pupil to achieve an A* grade at GCSE in any subject, regardless of which set he/she is in.

Pupils will be told which 'column(s)' they are in before the end of term, although the sets for each subject will not be announced until September. If you have any questions about the system, please do not hesitate to contact either me or your child's present Form Tutor.

Yours sincerely

M J Garner
Head of the Middle School

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