



17 September 2015

RE: YEAR 10 SETTING ARRANGEMENTS FOR IGCSE LANGUAGE & LITERATURE

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to inform you about some changes to the IGCSE curriculum to ensure that you are fully informed regarding the educational development of your child.

As I am sure you are aware, all of our mainstream English Year 10 students sit the IGCSE First English Language qualification. For most top International Universities, including the US and the UK Russell Group, the requirement for entry is a high level (B or above) IGCSE First English Language qualification unless a student is applying for an English Literature degree. This is why we at BISS so heavily prioritise this qualification. Historically, we have therefore only offered the English Literature IGCSE to Set 1 students.

However, in pursuit of a more inclusive curriculum, we have decided to ensure that both Set 1 and Set 2 students follow a parallel curriculum in Year 10. Therefore some students in Set 2 will be invited to sit both qualifications. This will be dependent upon a number of factors, namely: a passion for Literature; success in managing time and workload; an ability to sustain a high grade across assessments in both Language and Literature exams; and high performance in Language coursework.

As universities are so much more concerned with a high grade in IGCSE Language, for students who find it more challenging to assuredly attain this grade (especially those for whom English is not their first language), we think it is important to give them ample opportunities to improve their coursework and focus on one IGCSE English Language qualification only. Students who follow this route will still complete Literature units in Year 11 which will allow them to develop the skills required for IB as well as further enhance their language studies. Many of our students who have taken IGCSE First English Language only have gone on to great success at IB and beyond.

We will update you through Student-Parent-Teacher-Conferences and reports on your child's progress and give you an indication as to which option is likely to best suit them. Places in the joint IGCSE group are limited and are by invitation only. To ensure this group have adequate support to meet the requirements of both courses, we cannot consider students who do not fit the above specified criteria.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact your child's English teacher or myself at g-treeby@bisspuxi.com.

Yours sincerely,

Gemma Treeby
Head of English