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Dear Parent/Carer,

**RE: Transition to Key Stage 4**

As we start to consider the next steps for your children in preparation for moving from KS3 (year 9) into KS4 (year 10 and 11) I appreciate you may have some questions. Our KS3 experience has been carefully designed to support our students to the next steps at our Academy. Staff carefully plan and deliver their subjects to support the transition and ensure all our students meet their potential.

Whilst I appreciate that alternative pathways may be a consideration for some in year 10, I would strongly ask you to consider this carefully, especially about the potential impact on your child's progress. Our track record over a significant number of years in relation to outcomes for young people is unmatched in the area, giving them better life chances and more options after year 11. These options include a range of personal development opportunities including the Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme, Unifest residentials, employer 'open doors' events, full access to our career platform - Unifrog, a Career Ready programme including a paid internship in Post 16, as well as trips and experiences both in the UK and internationally. Coupled with our dedicated pastoral support to ensure your child is cared for in a supportive manner, I hope these are some of the same reasons you chose our academy in the first place in year 7.

We have a well established range of opportunities and experiences with both local and national businesses to give our students the best possible chances and to showcase their employability skills. We are currently working with The Royal Academy of Engineering, Balfour Beatty - an international infrastructure group, Wilmott Dixon - the UK's leading independent construction and property services, Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), the NHS and IM group, within the automotive, property and finance sectors. A number of these organisations see us as the academy of choice for pathways into their organisations including direct entry and apprenticeships. Our academy has also recently been nationally recognised in the Gatsby Foundation 2024 report which identifies us as demonstrating exemplary good practice in providing valuable encounters with employers and employees, as well as addressing the needs of each young person. Additionally, our revamped technology areas give students the chance to experience industry standard working environments.

As students move to selecting their option subjects and beginning the next stage of their journey, they will have wider access to state of the art equipment and resources that prepares them for the workplace. These include laser cutters, a FA approved 4G pitch, 3D printers, photographic workshops, fitness suites and a fully equipped media centre with a digital radio station. I know you will have questions so I would ask before you make any decision about alternative pathways beyond year 9, that you speak with us to have an impartial conversation about your child's education and experience in KS4.

Yours sincerely

**Darren Gelder**  
Executive Principal, Grace Academy Solihull

