

10 February 2025
GIL/Manage/Arbor/lca

Dear Parent/Carer

YEAR 9 - COMBINED OR TRIPLE SCIENCES

As you will be aware from the information provided during the options process, most students will study a Combined Science programme leading to two GCSEs. This is delivered over three years, using a flexible and personalised course structure that covers Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The two GCSEs are then awarded based on the average performance across all three Sciences. A smaller number of students will study Triple Science which is the three separate Science GCSEs, Biology, Chemistry and Physics, each awarded their own GCSE.

Entry into the different routes in Science GCSE depends on both ability and attitude. The Triple Sciences are really designed for the most able students with a keen passion and enthusiasm for the subject. Triple Science is a challenging route because it will examine more content than for Combined Science. Students will need to have a very good track record of high achievement in Science, English and Maths to ensure they can cope with the demands of the course. They will also need to be independent workers, who can complete work in their own time, and take responsibility for their own learning.

It is important to note that students are still able to access A-level Sciences with Combined Science and it will not limit their options at KS5 should they not take Triple Science. Students will be shown a short video explaining the key differences between Triple and Combined, this will be shared on Arbor and available for them to view with you at home.

Up to this point in the year, all students have been taught content common to both Combined and Triple routes. We are now looking to organise our Combined and Triple Science groups ahead of Year 10 timetabling.

The college will decide which route is the most appropriate for each student, based on prior attainment and attitude to learning. To help us select the right students, all Year 9 students will be sitting an assessment in their lesson on **Wednesday 19 March 2025**.

Students will receive more detailed guidance regarding the content of the assessment which will be shared with all groups on Arbor from Monday 17 February 2025, so that students have the necessary information and support to prepare for the assessment at



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home. There will be a period of in class revision during the week of **Monday 10 March 2025** with guided revision support from class teachers, delivered consistently as a department.

Students will also be surveyed via a Google form to give them an opportunity to state their preference and explain their reasoning behind their preference. This will be shared with students and completed in the lesson during the assessment week.

The final decision as to which Science course students take, will be made by the Science department and communicated to students. More information on the details of this will be sent nearer the time. Whichever option students are put forward for is exciting and all students will be supported as we move into Year 10. We have a very good track record of preparing Heathfield students for their GCSE Science exams and we are proud of how hard Year 9 are currently working.

There will be various progress check points in Year 10 whereby all students will be monitored closely to ensure they are meeting the demands of the Triple course. As such, we will regularly review whether students switch to the Combined Science route instead as we have flexibility to make changes up until the mock exams in Year 11.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact your child's Science teacher in the first instance or myself via jgillespie@heathfieldcc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Gillespie', written in a cursive style.

MISS J GILLESPIE
Curriculum Leader Science