Dear Parent/Carer,

At Lymm High School, we pride ourselves with ensuring pupils are on the best course for them particularly when pupils go into KS4. Due to the current qualification reforms new qualifications are still in the process of being accredited. This has put the department in a position, where when options were being chosen, staff were not able to have a clear understanding of all courses that were going to be accredited. Therefore, on options evening the department advertised Cambridge Nationals in IT.

Cambridge Nationals are vocational technical qualifications for 14-16 year olds. They have been created to support pupils who want to develop practical skills and knowledge relating to a broad employment area. They usually involve doing practical activities, learning skills and developing transferable skills like problem solving which are important in employment.

Recently, a new Cambridge Nationals in Creative Imedia course has been accredited by the Department of Education (DfE) and after extensive review of this course we feel this qualification would be the best choice for the pupils at Lymm High School. To corroborate our views, we have conducted an extensive student voice activity. We have spoken to many year 9 students, including many pupils who have chosen to take IT next year. Based on the verbal feedback from pupils and the results of the student voice it is apparent that pupils would prefer to study Cambridge Nationals in Creative Imedia, I have included some of the data received from the student voice below:

- 80% of pupils would prefer to use a more varied choice of software applications. Pupils were prompted to provide written feedback after this question, there was a heavy response about database and spreadsheet work being challenging but something they were not interested in exploring further at KS4.
- 79% of pupils selected Web design, graphic design and animations as more engaging topics. When prompted to comment pupils again expressed a desire to use more software applications and be allowed to complete more creative projects in lessons.
- 83% of pupils enjoyed working on independent projects and have stated that they enjoy the challenge of being encouraged to work independently.

The key difference between both Cambridge Nationals courses are:

Cambridge Nationals in IT is a mixture of business and IT and focuses on project management, databases and spreadsheets, this course is 50% exam and 50% coursework based. The exam focuses on hardware, software and legal issues in IT as well as data manipulation. The coursework element focuses on pupils creating a solution to a real-life scenario by creating a database and spreadsheet solution.

Cambridge Nationals in Imedia is a creative course which allows pupils to develop skills with multiple different software applications whilst managing a project based on a real-life scenario. There are four units for pupils to complete, each unit is worth 25% towards the final qualification. There are three coursework units involved in this qualification. Pupils undertake one exam which focuses on how to

effectively plan for a given scenario by using ICT software commonly used within industry, these skills help pupils learn how to design a solution and manage a project independently. The three different coursework elements focus on:

1. Creating digital graphics –They apply their skills and knowledge in creating digital graphics against a real-life scenario.
2. Creating a multipage website - They demonstrate their creativity by combining components to plan and create a functional, intuitive and visually pleasing website.
3. Creating interactive multimedia products- pupils develop the skills they have learnt on the previous unit to interpret a client brief and create an interactive multimedia product using multiple different software applications.

After reviewing the course content ourselves and taking into account feedback from student, we have made the decision to change from IT to Imedia. This ought to provide a more interesting and engaging experience for the students whilst still providing them with a qualification that is just as robust and well-respected. We hope you appreciate the reasons for the change and the fact that the late notice is something that is beyond our control, but we are aware that questions might arise from this letter and I encourage you to email me on the below email address so I can contact you at a specified time to discuss this in more detail should you so wish.

jturner@lymmhigh.org.uk

It is important to note that upon successful completion of the course your child will still have a certificate for an industry recognised IT qualification. The only difference is the qualification does focus more on developing solutions using IT software compared to developing written solutions to scenarios.

We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Yours faithfully

Mrs J Turner

Head of ICT Department