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Dear Parents/Guardians

Setting in English: Year 10

I am writing to explain our rationale for setting in English, as boys move onto their Literature and Language GCSE courses.

Where, previously, boys have been taught English in four tutor groups, they are now taught in five sets. This allows us to teach them in smaller numbers and therefore provide us with more time to spend with individual students. Four of these five sets are mixed-ability sets. This, in the context of a grammar school, means that they are students who we would expect to be aiming for top grades when they complete the course – typically up to 80% of the year group. We also create a fifth set – smaller in size (usually around 15 pupils compared to 27 or so in other sets) for students who we feel would benefit from more individual time with the teacher. This can be for a variety of reasons – specific learning difficulties, motivational challenges or weaker academic performance to name a few. These pupils are identified via their Year 9 teachers, as well as data produced from previous assessments.

We have found in previous years that this system works: a number of boys in the smaller sets this year went on to achieve A grades in English. This year, Mrs. Shingles will be teaching this set (10E/PVS). They will follow exactly the same syllabi and texts as the other sets, the only difference being the class size and methods of delivery by the teacher.

Please don't hesitate to contact me via my email address (cje@bws.wilts.sch.uk) if there is any more that you need to know regarding your son's English Language and Literature GCSEs.

Yours faithfully

Craig Ennew
Head of English