The Sutton Academy

Together Students Achieve

Principal: Ms L Gobin

11 November 2026

Dear Parents/Carers

As your child progresses through Year 9, we are beginning preparations for Key Stage 4, and the start of their GCSE English studies in Year 10.

To support this transition, we will be changing our current mixed-attainment English classes to attainment-based sets. This change has been carefully considered and is intended to ensure that all students are as well prepared as possible for the demands of the GCSE English Language and English Literature courses.

Working in attainment-based groups will allow teachers to more accurately identify individual strengths and areas for development. This will help us to pinpoint any gaps in knowledge, skills or understanding that may exist and provide targeted support and challenge where needed. By addressing these gaps during Year 9, we can ensure that students begin their GCSE courses with a strong foundation and the confidence needed to succeed.

The move to attainment-based sets will also enable teachers to tailor lessons more effectively, ensuring that the pace, level of challenge and support are appropriate for the needs of each group. Setting decisions will be informed by a range of evidence, including classwork, assessments and teacher professional judgement. We will continue to monitor student progress throughout the year, and placement within sets will be reviewed where appropriate.

We understand that any change to class organisation may raise questions, but please be assured that our primary aim is to provide every student with the best possible opportunity to achieve their potential. We believe that this approach will help us identify and address learning gaps before the start of the GCSE courses and support a smooth transition into Key Stage 4.

If you have any questions regarding these changes, please do not hesitate to contact the English Department.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

R Johnson

Mrs R Johnson
Faculty Leader for English