



EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER

Mr K Ford

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Mr G Pendlebury

10th July 2026

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to update you on GCSE Science provision for your child's year group as they move into Year 10 in September 2026.

As you may know, we have historically offered two possible routes to GCSE Science:

- **Combined Science: Trilogy (Double Award):**
 - *Students experience all 3 science disciplines*
 - *Students sit 6 examinations (1 hour 15 mins each), 2 Biology, 2 Chemistry and 2 Physics*
 - *Students receive 2 GCSE grades for this qualification*
 - *Highest possible grade: Grade 9*
- **Separate Sciences (Triple Award):**
 - *Students study all three science disciplines in greater depth and at a higher level*
 - *Students sit 6 longer examinations (1 hour 45 mins each)*
 - *Students receive a GCSE for each individual science subject: Biology, Chemistry and Physics*
 - *Highest possible grade: Grade 9*

Provision for this cohort

Following changes to our curriculum structure, and the staffing implications that come with these, we are unable to deliver the separate sciences course to this year group.

This means that **all students in Year 10** will follow the **Combined Science: Trilogy** (Double Award) course, and entry into the Separate Science GCSE examinations will not be possible for this cohort in the summer of 2028.

We understand that this is a change to what has been offered in previous years, and we want to reassure you that all options to try and deliver the course have been explored.

We are confident that the Combined Science course will give your child every opportunity to achieve excellent outcomes, and in many respects offers real advantages over the separate sciences route.

A top set, and our commitment to every student

A top set class will still run for this year group within the Eagles & Falcons and Hawks & Kites combinations respectively.

Whatever set a student is taught in, our commitment remains the same: to strive for the highest possible grade for every student on the Combined Science course.

This top set group will be determined by past performance, mock outcomes and professional judgement from the classroom teachers.

Why Combined Science is a strong route

- Students taking Combined Science are graded on the same 9-1 scale as Separate Science students, with the potential to achieve the highest possible grades.
- Students following either course can progress to A-Level science, provided they meet the relevant grade requirements. At GMS, we consider students attaining 7_6 on the Combined Science course for entry to A-Level sciences.
- Each exam is 30 minutes shorter than the equivalent Separate Science paper, amounting to 3 hours less time in the exam hall across the 6 papers. This is valuable time gained during a demanding exam period, helping to reduce stress and giving students more time to prepare for the next exam.
- There is around 30% less content to revise, meaning revision time can be more focused and, in our experience, more effective in improving outcomes.

What we have seen in previous cohorts

Experience from previous year groups has shown that many students go on to achieve higher overall grades on the Combined Science course than they may have done on Separate Sciences.

Two examples (of many):

- Student A attained grades of 6, 6 and 4 in their Year 10 mocks whilst following the Separate Sciences route, before going on to attain 8_7 in their Year 11 mocks after moving to Combined Science.
- Student B improved from 6, 8 and 8 to 9_9 in the same way.

We share this not to suggest every student's experience will be identical, but to illustrate the genuine advantages that the Combined Science course can offer.

If you have any questions relating to the content of this letter, please do contact me directly at JWebster@gms.bucks.sch.uk.

Yours faithfully,



Mrs. Jen Webster
Head of Science