Writhlington

Raising the Participation Age (RPA) - Information for Parents.

What is RPA?

Around 92% of 16 and 17 year olds already choose to continue in education or training. The Government is increasing the age at which all young people are required to do so. If your son or daughter is in **Year 11 in September 2012, they will have to continue in education or training until at least the end of the school year in which they turn 17**. If they are currently in **Year 10 or below, they will have to continue until at least their 18th birthday**.

RPA is not about raising the school leaving age. Young people will have a range of options for how they can participate, which could be through:

- Full-time education, such as school or college;
- An Apprenticeship; or
- Part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week.

Why are things changing?

All young people deserve the opportunity to develop skills and qualifications which will open doors to future employment, help them make the most of their potential, and earn more over their lifetime. Evidence shows that achieving qualifications at this age can help to boost a young person's prospects for life – for instance, young people with 2 or more A Levels earn around 14% more than those without.

What does this mean this year?

The legal requirement to participate will be on your son or daughter. However, your children will look to you and their teachers for advice and support as they make these decisions. Obviously you will want to do all you can to support them to make the right decision for them as they choose between the different education and training options.

Making choices about education and training can be a challenge and the school is committed to securing access to careers guidance which promotes the best interests of the pupils and helps them to make informed choices. If your son or daughter is unsure about the options for Year 12 they should speak to their tutor, Head of Upper School Mr Comber or Mr Burr Director of Sixth Form. Follow-up individual interviews with an independent careers advisor can also be arranged if requested.

Where can I find out more?

More information on RPA is available at:
http://education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa

The National Careers Service website makes it easy for both adults and young people to access information and advice about education, training and work. The website is at: https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk. Young people and parents can speak to an appropriately qualified adviser by contacting the helpline which is available from 8.00am to 10pm, seven days a week on **0800 100 900**, or for text messages on **07766 413 219**.