

Dear Parents/Guardians

RE: Year 11 GCSE Mock Exams

Mock exam week for Year 11 will take place from Monday 9th to Friday 13th November. The exams will take place in the student's normal classrooms over the week due to Covid restrictions.

You will find your son/daughters individual exam timetable attached. Please ask your son/daughter to check this timetable carefully so that s/he knows when each of the exams takes place.

These exams provide a good opportunity for your son/daughter to develop their revision skills and reflect on which methods work best. Please encourage your son/daughter to plan a revision timetable which is realistic so that s/he is able to stick to it. They should be aiming to do a couple of hours of revision a night with longer periods at the week end.

To help students focus on revision there will only be relevant revision activities set for Year 11 home learning over the coming weeks. Half term will provide a good opportunity for more concentrated periods of time spent on revision. If your son/daughter starts now s/he should feel in control and well prepared.

Purchasing A3 paper, revision cards and coloured pens can help with motivation but your son/daughter should try to use different active revision methods such as mind maps of particular topics or making flashcards. It is important that your son/daughter quizzes themselves or gets you to test them once they have written out revision cards or mind maps. It is the understanding, then memorizing (look, cover, write and check) and finally recall through quizzing that helps content stick!

Step One
Reading through class notes
Using resources on Teams area.
Using course textbooks
Mind maps/diagrams
Making/remaking class notes
Highlighting/colour coding
Flashcards
Using a revision wall to display your learning
Step Two
Write exam answers under timed conditions
Reading model answers
Using past exam questions & planning answers
Step Three
Marking your own work to a mark scheme
Studying mark schemes or examiner's reports
Working with other students in groups/pairs
Comparing model answers against your own work
Creating your own questions
Handing in extra exam work for marking
One to one discussions with teachers/tutors

This is an essential revision grid that your son/daughter will be encouraged to use in school and at home. You will see three steps to revision. Step one is a good start but it is important for your son/daughter to ensure they are also reaching Step two at this stage too in order to ensure that their learning is being embedded in their long term memory and they are able to apply and use the knowledge and skills confidently in practice questions. As they approach their GCSE's Step 3 will need to be included to ensure the highest possible grades for your son/daughter.

By starting to revise now, it will help to ensure that your son/daughter is prepared and avoids last minute panics. S/he should try to study at a table with no distractions and parents in the past have said that looking after their child's mobile phone whilst they revise has been helpful in allowing them to concentrate. This also creates good habits for the future. There are many ways parents can help such as providing a quiet environment and supplying drinks and snacks at regular intervals in order to give words of encouragement as well as check on progress. If you have the time, you could ask your son/daughter to 'teach you' what they have learnt – this is another method of revision – to check understanding and also helps with recall. Every student approaches their revision in a different way and these assessments will help them to see which methods work best for them.

By the time your son/daughter sits her GCSEs next year s/he will have developed strategies on how to prepare and cope with exams. Consequently, it is good to train them early on how to revise different subjects, where some need a lot of memorisation, others require practising questions and of course the importance of reading the exam questions and interpreting them correctly. This all comes with practice and if your son/daughter has prepared for the exams s/he can learn many valuable lessons from the feedback they will receive from their marked papers.

Your son/daughter should use their exercise book and any revision text book's they may have to help them revise as well as websites recommended by their teacher. The assessments will take different formats for different subjects; class teachers will tell students what sort of assessment to expect and a list of revision topics will be provided on Classcharts this week.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or your son/daughter's Head of Year if you have any queries regarding these exams.

Yours sincerely

Mrs A Kemp
Assistant Head Teacher