



25 May 2017

Dear Parent/Carer

End of Year exams (Years 7 – 10)

You may be aware that the examination system is changing radically. Year 11 are sitting the first, new-style GCSEs in English Language, English Literature and Maths more or less as I write, accompanied by the new 9 – 1 grading. Most other subjects are following suit in 2018.

The coursework element of most qualifications has been removed, with many subjects now graded on terminal exams only. In addition, students are required to learn much more by heart than ever before; students sitting GCSE English Literature exams this week have, for the first time, had to remember passages of Shakespeare and Dickens rather than take their books into the exam with them.

It is, therefore, only right that we start preparing younger students for this now.

All students in Years 7 to 10 will be sitting end of year exams once the bulk of the GCSEs have finished. Core exams (English, Maths and Science) will be sat in the Hall, and students will have their own individual timetable for these which identifies the date and time of the exam as well as the specific seat allocated for that exam. Core exams begin on Thursday 15 June.

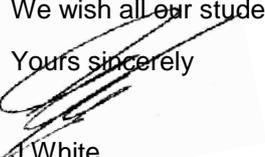
Non-core subjects will also have exams: these are no less important than the core, but it would be impossible to schedule everything in the Hall.

Full details of exam procedures etc are in the Curriculum section of our website. However, there are some key things that you can do to help prepare your son/daughter for the exams:

- Ensure that they do not leave revision until the last minute. Whilst we would not expect students to spend all of half term revising, this is a good opportunity to get some additional work done. Older students in particular need to get into the good habit of writing a revision timetable
- Ensure that your son/daughter is properly equipped for exams. They will need the basics such as black pens, pencils etc as well as the usual equipment for Maths. Calculators can be used for some Maths papers as well as some Science papers
- Provide them with a bottle of water for exams. Keeping the brain hydrated is essential, especially if the current spell of hot weather continues. Water should be in a clear, plastic bottle with the label removed
- Feeding the brain is also important, so make sure they have breakfast before morning exams in particular
- Encourage them to sleep well during the exam period. This includes going to bed a reasonable time, and switching off phones and tablets before going to bed
- Put them under pressure to do their best... but watch out for signs of stress too. Contact your child's Head of House or the pastoral team if you have any concerns.

We wish all our students good luck with their exams.

Yours sincerely


J White
Vice Principal

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