



9th November 2018

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Year 11 Mock Examination: Preparation, Study Leave and Support

Your daughter will be taking her Christmas mock examinations at the end of this term. The exams will take place between 10th December and 18th December. Practical exams for subjects such as Art, Textiles and Resistant Materials will take place on the 6th and 7th December.

Each student will receive their own personalised examination timetable next week. A copy of the timetable for all students will be posted on the school website. This will give your daughter the chance to check for any clashes or errors on her timetable, and have those resolved. This is the same process that will take place when the summer public examinations timetable is published for your daughter.

Your daughter will be on study leave during this period of time, from the 10th to the 18th of December. This means that she will take her examinations and undertake independent study here in school. However, if she does not have an AM or PM exam she will not be expected on-site but should be studying at home. Results of the Mock examinations will be shared with your daughter when we hold our 'mock results event' in January, and you will receive a copy at home.

Further details of all the above will be shared with you.

These exams are incredibly important in preparing for the final public exams that your daughter will take in May and June 2019:

- Sitting examinations can be a very different experience than taking tests and producing learning in lessons and for homework. However, it is through examinations that students are assessed and it is therefore important that your daughter develops her confidence and working habits to be able to perform in these exams.
- The examinations in May/June will cover content from across the whole GCSE course and not just topics covered in recent months; it is essential that your daughter builds into her homework/independent study schedule reviewing and revising prior learning - these mock



examinations will give your daughter a clear focus to start this process, if she has not yet done so.

- Some of the examination papers are tiered, for example a foundation and a higher paper. Teachers need to allocate students to the appropriate tier by February 2019; the performance in these exams, alongside in-class performance, helps teachers to make these informed decisions.
- Teachers will analyse the outcomes of these mocks and use this analysis to further inform their planning for the end of the courses and revision prior to the final examinations.

Students who do not prepare adequately for the mock examinations put themselves at a huge disadvantage; they have not tested themselves under examination conditions, they have not provided teachers with an honest analysis of their ability at this point in the course, and they have not put in place quality study habits to support their performance in the final examinations.

We will support by:

- Offering study prep Tuesday to Thursday - 7.30am to 8.30am and 3.30pm to 5.00pm each day.
- Teachers will ensure that students have reminders of topics to be covered, revision guidance and additional resources that students can access.

Students should prepare by:

- Using their class and homework notes to underpin their revision.
- Attending any specific sessions or interventions that they are invited to.
- Completing their homework AND revising between now and their exams.

You can support by:

- Monitoring that your daughter is revising in the evenings and at the weekend.
- Support her revision by taking the time to ask her quiz questions or to explain specific topics to you.
- Providing your daughter with a quiet space/time to study in.
- Ensuring that she eats well, gets plenty of sleep and drinks plenty of water - a healthy and rested mind learns well.
- ***Notifying her HoY Ms Nye, if you feel that your daughter is overly anxious so we can offer support***

Hints and tips:

- **Revision means revisiting information you have learnt previously.**
- **Simply going over class notes, re-reading the textbook or writing out huge swaths of text and trying to remember a topic does not work.**
- Students have a habit of revising what they already know - as it is easier and comforting - but quality revision will always be challenging and push students to tackle a topic that they are less confident about and require concentrated study.
- Students should review their performance in the summer mock exams and use this to focus their attention on the key areas for revision.

- If students are not clear about what they should revise they should discuss this with their subject teacher.
- Students should approach revision by studying for chunks of 20 mins and then take a break. The break does not need to be long; a change of topic, a glass of water, a stretch of the legs.

Key techniques:

- The aim of revision is to study a topic and be able to reduce the amount of information to a series of key points; then you should be able to expand upon these in the exam answer.
- At the end of a chunk of revision, the key points should act as prompts; key terms should be reduced to one side of paper or a revision card that can be revisited.
- Revising past exam papers, dissecting model essay answers and timed questions.
- A mind map is a simplifying, graphical way to represent ideas and concepts. It is a visual thinking tool that helps structure information, helping to better analyse, comprehend, synthesise, recall and generate new ideas.
- The use of memory techniques such as Acronyms, Mnemonics and picture stories are often used to recall the order of events, formulae or equations.
- Make flashcards with clear key points.
- Teach friends and family.

I wish all of your daughters' the very best of luck in these examinations and thank you in advance for your support in preparing her for this mock examination season.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justine McDonald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'J' and 'M'.

Justine McDonald
Headteacher