

Dear Parent/Carer,

Year 11 Pre Public Examinations (PPE's) – Monday 1st – Friday 12th November 2021

Please find attached the details regarding the Year 11 PPE's.

During this fortnight, students who are not taking examinations will continue to attend lessons with their teachers but will be able to revise. Students must bring revision materials to their lessons in order to support their revision to ensure they are prepared for their examinations.

It is essential that these examinations are used by students as an opportunity to consolidate their understanding and to refine revision and examination techniques. The results of the exams will also be used, alongside other data and student level information, to inform tiers of entry for summer examinations, re-set classes and inform targeted interventions for students and **potentially be used to support the awarding of Teacher Assessed Grades should we need to go into partial or full lockdown as a result of COVID19**. They will also be used as key indicators of student performance in the GCSE Summer Exams, **and will inform predicted grades for upcoming Sixth Form and College applications and interviews.**

It is essential that every student performs to their potential in these examinations. It is expected therefore that all students, to maximise their chance of success, use the upcoming weeks to prepare themselves fully by revising each of the topics covered to date as part of their GCSE / vocational courses. Attached is a booklet detailing ways in which you can support your child with revision. The booklet also contains summary information about the content of the examinations for each subject.

Please encourage your child to take these examinations seriously and support them by helping them to devise a revision timetable to manage their study time across all subjects.

During the examinations, when students are not sitting an exam, they will remain in school, where they will be allowed to revise in their normal timetabled lessons supported by their teachers.

Thank you in anticipation of your full support.

Yours faithfully

Mr S Tilbury

Deputy Head Teacher

Mrs E Watts

Deputy Head Teacher

Timetable for Y11 Pre Public Examinations

The examination timetable will be published closer to the examinations and be situated on the school website

The importance of the PPE's

We fully appreciate the impact that Covid has had on our Year 11 students and we have tailored these examinations to give students the practice and opportunity in experiencing an examination series. These examinations are of importance and students need to take them seriously as Ofqual have stated that although examinations will go ahead in 2022, if Covid has an adverse effect on education in the run up to these examinations, schools may be expected to use Teacher Assessed Grades. Therefore, these examinations could be used as evidence towards your son and/or daughters Level 2 qualifications in the summer.

At the end of September 2021, further clarity was provided by the government about how Year 11 will be assessed in the summer including the changes to the content examined in some examinations and the early release of the areas of the syllabus that students will be examined on. Please see the details below that will also be shared with your son and/or daughter.

Ofqual changes to the 2022 GCSE* examinations

*these do not apply to Vocational qualifications but we will communicate these changes when they are released by the examination bodies

Examinations are expected to go ahead in 2022 as planned with the following adaptations made to courses:

1. This means there will be a choice in content for some subjects GCSE English Literature, GCSE History, GCSE Geography
2. GCSE Art and Design: TEXTILES will be assessed by portfolio only. There will be no examination. We will inform you of the changes to the BTEC Art qualification when they are released.
3. Practical work in Science may be delivered by demonstration
4. Schools will be given advanced information about the focus of the content of the examinations for all GCSE subjects with the exception of GCSE English literature, history, and geography who have reduced content. Teachers will be given information about the focus of examinations in early February.
5. Students will be given a formulae sheet for GCSE mathematics in summer 2022. Examination boards will provide copies of the formulae sheet for use in teaching and to ensure that students are familiar with it prior to the exams.
6. Students will be given a revised equation sheet for GCSE physics and combined science in summer 2022, covering all the equations required in the subject content. Examination boards will provide copies of the equation sheet for use in teaching and to ensure that students are familiar with it prior to the exams

Grading standards will be a 'transition year' with grade boundaries set by exam boards reflecting a midway point between 2021 and 2019.

Results days for exams next year will return to their normal format, with GCSE results being released on 25 August 2022.

Exam boards have been asked to ensure that there is at least a 10 day gap between exams in the same subject to reduce the risk of students missing all exams in a subject. Examination boards have been told that 'special consideration' should apply for students who unavoidably miss one or more exams in a subject due to Covid. This means students will be able to achieve a grade through the special consideration process, so long as they have completed the assessment for at least one component of the qualification.

If there is further widespread and significant disruption, Further contingencies are already planned including:

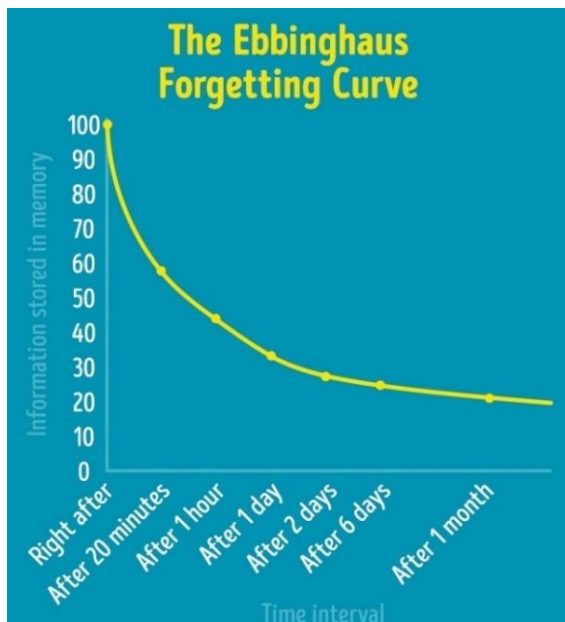
- bringing forward the publication of advance information about the focus of the content of exams, to enable schools and colleges to focus their remaining teaching time
- a possible 'Exams Support Service' to support centres with access to venues and invigilators.

In addition: **The DfE has confirmation that if exams are cancelled, grades will be determined through teacher assessment.**

Why is revision important?

The forgetting curve

At GCSE students are required to learn a large amount of knowledge but the brain can forget as much as 97% of information within 30 days, unless it is constantly revisited and relearned. Teachers will set tests throughout the course to help embed knowledge into the longer term memory but students are also required to self-test and make revision resources throughout their courses. Practice examinations are a way to support students' experience the exam and familiarise themselves with the systems and pressures of sitting in the examination hall. It serves as a safe environment in which to make mistakes so that these are not made in summer of 2021. The process of revision also breaks up the course and provides manageable chunks of content to revise throughout their GCSE years so that by the time the summer examinations commence they are already an expert at revising and they would have revisited the materials at least four times.



The examination process

Studying and revising for GCSE's is a process that starts in KS3 until the end of the Summer examinations in 2022. Students must aim to revise throughout their GCSE's so that they continually practice GCSE skills and embed the wealth of knowledge expected for each subject. Students should be continually revising subject content and self-testing throughout their GCSE's so that they space out revision but also have the confidence to retrieve knowledge in the examination.

Staff will support students through the testing of knowledge throughout the courses students' study and students will be given feedback on the examination skills that they will be assessed.

The most important role as parent/carers is to be supportive. GCSE's are important and require effort and time but students also need to develop their own interests and have time for their well-being. Therefore, as parents/carers it is important to ensure there is a good balance between pressuring and motivating and not allowing students to become too complacent.

Academic achievement is important in ensuring stability for the future but your son/daughter's well-being is of great importance too and therefore the support of home and school is imperative. Do not underestimate the amount of stress your son/daughter may be feeling. If things seem to be getting

too much, try to encourage them to share their thoughts and feelings and inform the school if you feel there is support that could be put in place to help.

Helpful hints to support your son/daughter:

- Encourage without pressure
- Take an interest without being concerned about everyone else in the class – your child’s targets are your bench mark
- Speak to teachers if you have any concerns about your child’s progress and well-being
- Familiarise yourself with Google Classroom
- Encourage students to attend revision lessons and speak to their teachers if they are stuck
- Help to plan revision using revision timetables
- Structure time on electronic devices so that your child has an academic and personal balance of time
- Test your son/daughter on the knowledge they have to learn – this is one of the most effective methods of revision
- Time them when completing exam questions and be the stopwatch
- Familiarise yourself with their revision programme so that you know the order of examinations and can help them prepare
- Check students are well equipped with equipment from black pens, to rulers and calculators
- Try to remain calm and remember they may be stressed

Revision tips to share with your child or to help your child with:

1. **Revision space:** Give your child a quiet place to work without social media and other distractions

2. Know when each examination starts and ends – make **examination timetables visual**

3. Support your child creating a **revision timetable**, especially in the lead up to preparation and the summer examinations

4. Encourage **short breaks** between revising

REVISION

* = revise if possible
// = no revision/break

TIME	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
8:30-4:30	school	school	school	school	school	school	school
4:30-5:00	media	chemistry	media	maths	english	maths*	//
5:00-5:30	english	chemistry	media	maths	english	maths*	//
5:30-6:00	//	//	maths	english	media	//	//
6:00-6:30	english	english	//	//	//	//	//
6:30-7:00	maths	english	//	//	chemistry	//	//
7:00-7:30	//	//	english	chemistry	//	*	biology
7:30-8:00	//	//	physics	chemistry	//	*	media
8:00-8:30	maths	biology	//	//	chemistry	english	//
8:30-9:00	maths	maths	maths	biology	physics	english	//
9:00-9:30	//	//	//	//	//	//	//
9:30-10:00	biology	maths	biology	biology	phys*	//	//
10:00-10:30	media	physics	biology	media	phys*	//	//

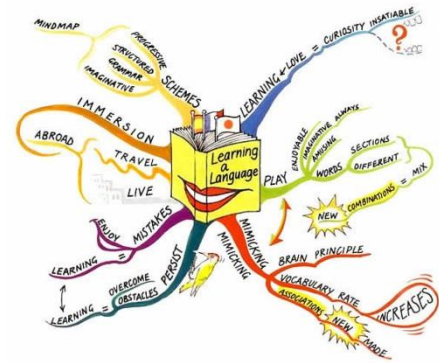
5. **Provide brain food and encourage exercise** – even just going for walk

6. **Do not allow your child to go to bed late** before an exam: last minute revision is not proven to support good memory retention and can in fact hinder the retention of information



7. Encourage your child to use a variety of **revision techniques**:

- Flash cards
- Mind maps
- Testing
- Create posters
- Diagrams and charts



8. **Test** your child and time them when practicing exam questions

9. Build in **rewards and treats** so that your child has something to look forward to – this could be as simple as walking the dog together, watching a film or making a nice cup of hot chocolate

Helping your child to manage exam stress

Students must know that it is normal to be stressed during this period of time and most importantly they must know how to manage their exam stress so that they can perform to the best of their ability.

As parent/carers you can help students by:

- Making healthy but tasty food
- Recognising that your son/daughter may be short tempered and irritable and fight the urge to retaliate when they snap at you – it is not personal
- Let some things go such as chores or tidying their bedroom as they have a lot on their minds
- When your son/daughter is on a break, make that break count and gauge their mood as to whether they want to talk about their work or whether discussing something neutral is better



Helpful websites:

<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/school-college-and-work/school-college/exam-stress/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-exam-stress/>

<http://www.studentminds.org.uk/examstress.html>

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/teenagers/school-learning/exam-stress/>

After the exam

After each exam, give students the opportunity to talk about how they have done and allow them to do the talking while you listen. Encourage them not to dwell on mistakes they may have felt they have made. They may want some space to compare notes with other friends. You may want to share your experiences of exams as this may reassure them.

Plan an event to mark the results, whatever they are and have some fun with your child. Make it clear that you love and value your child for who they are, and not for what happened in an exam.