

8 May 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: KS3 Assessments

Thank you to all the parents who attended the recent Key Stage 3 Parent Information Evening; the Sixth Form Common Room was nearly full and it was good to meet and talk with you. We appreciate you giving up your time to attend. As we said at the start of the evening, it is so important we work together to support your daughter. For those of you who were unable to attend the evening the presentation slides have been loaded onto the school website:

http://www.holtschool.co.uk/uploads/Parents_Information/Letters_and_announcements/2018_March/Parents_Information_evening_KS3_20.03.18.pdf
http://www.holtschool.co.uk/uploads/Parents_Information/Letters_and_announcements/2018_March/Understanding_your_teenager_March_2018_-_Without_Video.pdf

The KS3 assessments take place between 4th June and 15th June 2018. The assessments will take place in lessons over the fortnight and I have attached the assessment fortnight timetable, of which your daughter will also be given a copy. Please ask your daughter to check this timetable carefully so that she knows when each of her assessments takes place. Her tutor will make sure she understands her timetable in the coming weeks.

These assessments provide a good opportunity for your daughter to develop her revision skills and reflect on which methods work best. Please encourage your daughter to plan a revision timetable which is realistic so that she is able to stick to it. She should be aiming to do about one (Year 7) to two hours (Year 8/9) revision a night. To help students focus on revision there will be no home learning set from 14th May up until the assessment period, unless it is to support revision e.g. maths questions or a mind map on the French revolution in history. There is no need for your daughter to spend all of half term revising; if she starts now, plans the equivalent of an hour or two a day during the half term and revises over the two week assessment period, she should feel in control and well prepared.

Your daughter should try to use different active revision methods such as mind maps of particular topics or making flashcards. Purchasing A3 paper, revision cards and coloured pens can help with motivation. By starting to revise now, it will help to ensure that your daughter is prepared and avoids last minute panics. She should try to study at a table with no distractions and parents in the past have said that holding onto their daughter's mobile phone whilst they revise has been helpful in allowing them to fully concentrate. There are lots of 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 daughter to 'teach you' what she has learnt – this is another method of revision. 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 daughter sits her GCSEs she will have developed strategies on how to prepare and cope with linear exams, which cover the content from two years of study in two to three hours of exams. Consequently, it is good to train her 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 daughter has prepared for the assessments she can learn from the feedback she receives from her marked assessments. After the exams, Heads of Year will do an assembly on how to deal with disappointment if results are poorer than expected and how to bounce back by taking on board feedback e.g. reading the questions or explaining their point in more detail.

All year groups will find the BBC Bitesize materials and My Maths helpful. Your daughter should use her exercise book and text book to help revise too. 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 are provided in the booklet attached. Your daughter's Head of Year will or has talked about the assessments in assembly and gone through some revision techniques.

Please do not hesitate to contact your daughter's Head of Year if you have any queries regarding these assessments.

Year 7 Mrs N Thomas
Year 8 Miss C Shephard
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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kate Royle'.

Kate Royle
Assistant Headteacher