

11th September 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Year 11 – Key dates

The start of term has been so lovely, with our Year 11s and all of the other year groups back in school; a stark contrast to the atmosphere in June-July with only a few students in at a time.

Step counts are peaking for students and staff as they navigate the one-way system with good humour. We are now reminding all students that they should be wearing face coverings whilst moving between lessons to reduce risk of transmission. Please can you make sure your daughter has a clean mask every day.

I have had so much positive feedback already from staff about how focused your daughters are in lessons as well as their impeccable organisation of notes in their various folders. As lockers are not in use in school at the moment, to avoid gatherings of mixed year groups, it is fine for your daughter to have a 'day folder' where she holds just the notes for the day and then transfers these to her subject folders at home. This might be a better option if she has to walk or cycle to school...it is less bulky and heavy.

This is obviously a very important year and Year 11 are working hard towards achieving their very best in the summer, for sure. They have matured so much during lockdown and I really feel they have become more independent in their studying and have grown in confidence. They know they can adapt and rise to the challenge. Your daughters worked so hard during lockdown. Their effort and organisation to complete all of the daily work set cannot be underestimated and it will have certainly given them strength to cope with the pressures of Year 11.

To give you a heads up here is a list of key events in Year 11. It would be good to talk to your daughter about them and help her visualise the year as well as set monthly plans and of course the weekly to do lists...that turn into revision timetables in preparation for the November PPEs and then in March through to June for the actual GCSEs.

- 8th October – The Holt virtual 6th Form open evening on TEAMS
- 21st October – KS4 Parent Information Evening on study skills – Live TEAMS
- 21st October – Autumn 1 Reviews issued
- 9th, 10th, 12th November – Maths Wave 1 PPEs
- 13th November – Year 11 Study Skills Workshop
- 20th November – 6th form Taster Day
- 23rd November – English Lit Wave 1 PPE
- 3rd December- Year 11 Remote Parent Evening (Individual appointments held with staff remotely)
- 4th – 15th January – Year 11 PPEs
- 3rd February – Spring 1 Reviews Issued
- 1st -5th March- Maths and English Wave 2 PPEs
- 22nd -23rd March – English Lit PPE
- 31st March – Spring 2 Review issued
- GCSE Exams – Ofqual has not made a final decision on the timetable, and is still drawing up contingency plans for the summer's exams. We will let you know as soon as we have confirmation.
- 2nd July - Leavers assembly and Prom



Parents often ask how they can support their daughter in Year 11. Here are some tips:

- Help your daughter establish and maintain good study routines
 - On average 2 hours study after school on a weekday and 4-5 hours at the weekend.
 - To fill this study time with revision if all home learning has been completed.
 - To have a to do list ...one could be weekly and another daily...which lists home learning and revision.
 - To encourage your daughter to prepare thoroughly for tests and PPEs – using the revision lists and subject specifications. You might have to help her prepare a revision timetable. Remind her of the importance of repetition and retrieval to help transfer learning into the long-term memory. They all did so well last year in prepping for the Year 10 PPEs so I think they are fairly confident in planning for revision and have a good foundation of Year 10 knowledge to build on as they mostly took revision seriously last year.
 - To avoid procrastination – it is good to take away distractions or your daughter could try the pomodoro study method <https://tomato-timer.com/>
 - Check your daughter has the revision guides for her subjects.
- Encourage your daughter
 - To keep up with clubs and social events (where possible with covid restrictions), family events, family walks and so on.
 - To build in relaxation – Netflix/baking/crafts/exercise
- Give your daughter recognition for her efforts
 - To have a fridge full of healthy and not so healthy snacks – especially when revising. Take her up food when studying...always a good way to check in.
 - To acknowledge your daughter is working hard but do not interrogate too much about what she is studying unless she wants to talk about it. If she does want to talk about her learning...that is great...getting into a dialogue helps her check her understanding.
 - Take your daughter out for a coffee and cake – not quite so easy to escape up to bedroom and nice to talk about things other than studies.

I have attached some key takeaways from Lisa Damour's book Under Pressure that you might find useful.

Please do contact me if you have any further questions or concerns – we are in this together and want your daughter to achieve her best as well as enjoy her learning and friends in school this year.

Many thanks to all of you for your hard work and continued support and I will be writing to you again at half term or before if there is updated information to share.

Have a good weekend

Miss Shephard
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