

5th December 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian

Re: Year 11 Revision and Pre Public Exams (PPE)

As the end of term is rapidly approaching, I thought this would be a good time to update you on aspects to do with revision and examinations. As you are aware, your daughter has already taken her English PPE and the first maths wave exam. If her results were not as she would have liked or expected, then this will help her to understand where she went wrong and how she will be able to improve in the future, and identify whether this is due to examination technique or revision skills.

Following on from the parent information evening on study skills and revision techniques held earlier this term, together with the one in Year 10, we have now presented to a large majority of parents in Year 11, which is brilliant and we are grateful for all your support. The slides from the presentation on study skills can be found on the school website –

https://www.holtschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Letters_and_Announcements/Parents%20Information%20evening%20for%20GCSE%202018%20-%20adapted%20version.pdf

We have compiled a 'What to Revise Booklet' for the Year 11 girls to refer to in preparation for their Pre Public Exams (mocks) that will take place from the 3rd January. The booklet is quite long, so you should only print off those pages relevant to the subjects your daughter is studying. It may be easier if your daughter saves the document to a PC or laptop if possible for ease of reference so she can prioritise what she has to learn in the limited time from now, up to and during the Christmas break. Please click on the following link to access the booklet –

https://www.holtschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Letters_and_Announcements/Year%2011%20PPEs%20Revision%20booklet%20-%20%20Dec%202018%20for%20Jan%202019%20Vn.pdf

We have now held two study and revision skills sessions for our year group; one was towards the end of Year 10 and the recent one was a month ago. In addition, there have been assemblies to the year on GCSE mindset.

Your daughter should now be creating a revision timetable and starting to revise some topics, when she can, bearing in mind home learning is still being set. She should focus on the topics that are completely new first and then go back to the topics she has revised before, for example, for a recent test or in preparation for the Year 10 exams last summer. Your daughter should be averaging at least 2 hours study a night (including home learning set) and an average 3-5 hours at the weekend. During the Christmas holidays an average of 3-5 hours a day would be reasonable, when the days are free of family events. These timings are just a guide; you know your daughter and whether or not she is working enough or doing too much. It is also very important to build some catch up time into the schedule to cater for all eventualities. A proper organised plan/schedule for the next few weeks will help your daughter to feel in control and therefore help reduce stress levels. Remember – if you fail to prepare, prepare to fail.

Your support and encouragement cannot be underestimated in building up your daughter's confidence, ability to bounce back from disappointment, stamina and ability to face the challenges of the next six months. The ideal scenario would be that your daughter enjoys the challenge as well as the learning over the next few months. Many educational psychologists have written on the role of parents – here are a few snippets - according to John Hattie: “The effect of parental engagement over a student's school career is equivalent to adding an extra two to three years to that student's education”. Carole Dweck, in her work on growth mindset', has very useful advice for parents including 'praising effort and not ability' and 'embracing failure on the path to success'.

I have also attached the timetable for the PPE exams next term which run from 3rd – 16th January; when your daughter does not have an exam she will be in normal lessons. There is the external 'real' GCSE exam for Child Development on 10th January and ongoing during next term will be language orals. There will be further maths and English exams from 5th– 11th March. The actual GCSE exams start on 13th May but I will be in contact with you again before this date.

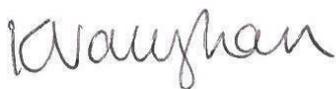
Again we cannot stress the importance of good attendance; this of course helps, as not only will your daughter have all her notes and will not need to spend extra time copying up, but it also means that she does not miss any additional snippets of information that may be given out in lessons.

It is important for your daughter to have a healthy balance of study and relaxation so please encourage her to take exercise, rest and to socialise with friends and family as well as to study in preparation for the PPE exams.

We heeded the above advice this week; Year 11 have worked hard in lessons and the majority took one afternoon off to visit Westfield, where they enjoyed the shopping experience; many also took the opportunity to just chat with one another and to sit down for a meal together. I hope that this pattern of work and fun will be mirrored over the holiday period.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding your daughter. I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and all your family a very Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely



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