

27th January 2022

Dear Parents / Carers

Year 11 Assessment update

I hope you and your families are safe and well. As the turn of the new year draws the summer examinations ever closer, I am writing to you to advise you on how you can support your child in preparation for their GCSE exams. The mock exams scheduled for January have been cancelled and the next set of mock exams will take place in March. This decision has been taken in order to allow teachers to further fill gaps in learning and include guidance and advance information from exam boards which will be released by 7th February. This means teachers can set mock exams that will give students a more realistic experience, as it will mirror the summer exams as much as possible.

We want to support your child as much as possible to maximise progress and you will be receiving various letters from the academy highlighting intervention opportunities. Please note that these may include Saturdays and the holidays.

Further information on these changes can be found on the following website;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-changes-to-the-assessment-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022/outcome/decisions-proposed-changes-to-the-assessment-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2022>

Revision help

To support your child in these final, crucial months of their GCSE courses, with this letter you will find a revision help sheet that will allow you to support your child to revise smartly. It is vital to get it right; and your child is not simply reading their notes, as they need to be able to learn, retain, recall, and apply huge volumes of information to exam questions in order to access marks. The attached revision techniques are very effective when revising for GCSEs.

Your child has access to a variety of online resources which their teachers have already informed them about. To register for these your child must use their school email.

I do hope this information is useful to you as we all support our children on their journey to GCSE success. Please do not hesitate to contact me at s.taj@corerockwood.academy if you require any further information or advice.

Yours faithfully



Ms S Taj
Head of Year 11

1. Support your child to devise a clear revision plan

Your child should be spending at least 2 hours a week on revision for each subject (including any homework set). **Can they tell you their dedicated time for each subject? Have they shown you their revision timetable?**

2. Ensure they knows what revision resources are available to them.

- All students have access to GCSE POD, MathsWatch and most subjects have SenecaLearning. These have revision resources available for child.
- Completed classwork and homework should be used as the basis for revision. However, reading through classwork alone is not enough. Your child should be making thorough revision notes on each topic. **Ways of doing this are outlined in section 3.** Your child should begin their revision by making sure that class work for each subject is in the correct order and check no work has been missed.
- Research shows that testing is an extremely effective revision method. Therefore, your child should be building exam questions into their revision schedule. This will enable a thorough focus on exam technique. Each subject has already provided revision materials to your child.

Other methods of self-testing are outlined in section 4.

3. Support your child to make effective notes:

Examples of making effective notes are outlined below:

- A separate notebook for each subject. Class notes can then be summarised and condensed into this notebook for effective recall.
- Use of spider diagrams/knowledge organisers/revision clocks - students decide how to divide a topic into subsections and try to make notes on one side of A3. This can include images and diagrams.
- Flash cards - students decide in advance how many cards they will aim to condense a topic into.

4. Help your child to understand that testing themselves is the most effective revision technique

Strategies for self-testing are outlined below:

- Exam questions are the most effective - 45 minutes of note making can be concluded with 15 minutes of answering questions
- 'Brain dumps' using a knowledge organiser - students study the knowledge organiser, put it away and then write down everything they can remember. The knowledge organiser can then be re-examined in order for students to work out what they have successfully remembered and what they need to re-cap
- Testing with flashcards - once completed, your child could hand the flash cards to you or to a sibling and your child can tell you what she/he remembers.

5. Ensure that your child has a positive attitude towards revision

- Support them to manage any distractions, including having an effective revision space where they can sit upright, and discuss how to manage the distractions of social media.
- Regular study breaks are important in order to maintain concentration over a long period of time
- Eating healthy and drinking plenty of water also keeps the brain alert for longer
- Getting to bed at a sensible time and being well rested will also help concentration levels
- Spending time together and talking about matters other than exams and revision can also provide a much-needed break
- Encourage your child to communicate with her/his class teachers if they have any worries about exams in each subject