**Year 10 Parent Information Evening December 2016**

If you did not attend the Year 10 Parent Information Evening, I have tried to present here the information that was relayed to parents. Even if you did attend, there was rather a lot of information to take in and as promised here are the main points.

**GCSE Mathematics**

* Second year group to undertake the new Maths GCSE.
* Students will take 3 exams for their GCSE in Mathematics:
* 1 non-calculator and 2 calculator papers each 1 hour and 30 minutes long
* Equal weighting (33% each)
* More emphasis on problem solving techniques.
* More content to be covered
* Students will need to memorise formulae to use.

**How are we are preparing the students for the GCSE Mathematics?**

* Assessments have been re-written to reflect the change in style of the new GCSE.
* Increased variety of work in lessons, encouraging deeper understanding and ability to tackle unfamiliar problems.
* Increase in ‘reading for meaning’ – extracting key information, and understanding what the question requires.
* Encouraging use of Mathswatch and MyMaths websites which have both been thoroughly updated to match the new curriculum.

**What can students do to ensure success in GCSE Mathematics?**

* Students need to make sure they are frequently looking over their work to make sure key methods and formulae remain fresh in their minds.
* Complete all homework, to the very best of their ability. Any ‘spare’ homework time should be used for reviewing/revising work.
* Bring full equipment to every lesson (there is a list of equipment in the planner)
* Make sure they ask for help if they are stuck with any of the work.
* Use the drop-in session in the Mathematics Department on a Tuesday and Thursday after school for extra help.

**What can parents do?**

* Take an interest. Ask your child about their maths work.
* Be positive about maths, and highlight when you use it in your everyday life or at work.
* Help them learn key formulae.
* Make sure your child completes their homework to the best of their ability. If you feel able, then help them when they are ‘stuck’.
* Contact school if you have any concerns.
* Use resources available online to support your child

Including [www.mymaths.co.uk](http://www.mymaths.co.uk/) and [www.vle.mathswatch.com](http://www.vle.mathswatch.com/)

**GCSE English Language**

* Assessment is by two external examinationsat the end of Year 11, each is worth 50%.
* Paper One – Responding to one literary extract with questions focusing on language, structure and evaluation. Section B will be a creative writing response.
* Paper Two – Responding to two non-fiction texts written in different time periods. Questions focus on comparison, language and writers’ methods. Section B will be a discursive or argumentative response.
* ALL students will sit the same paper.

**GCSE English Literature**

* Assessment is by two external examinationsat the end of Year 11. Assessments are closed book, meaning that students cannot take a copy of the text into the exam.
* Paper One:
  + A Shakespeare play – *Macbeth*
  + 19th century novel *– Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*
* Paper Two:
  + A modern text – *An Inspector Calls*
  + Poetry – seen and unseen.
* All students will sit the same paper.

**How we will support your child in English**.

* We carry out regular GCSE assessments, adhering to the AQA question format used in the sample examination papers, and provide detailed feedback to support your child in knowing their ‘next steps’.
* Intervention for students not making expected progress.

**What you can do to support your child in English**

* Encourage wide readingat home. Read texts together and ‘quality’ newspapers such as ‘The Guardian’, ‘The Independent’ or ‘The Telegraph’.
* Read the set textsyour child is studying so you can ask questions about characters, plots and themes.
* Discuss with your child the targets their English teacher has set in the assessment book/examination scripts.
* Ask your child to read through their work with you, have a thesaurus and dictionary to hand.
* Purchase revision guides such as ‘York Notes’for the three GCSE set texts**.** Use BBC Bitesize and the AQA website.
* Closely monitor ‘showmyhomework’.

**Continuous revision**

Students have so much information to remember and it is therefore essential that they are continually going over the work that has been done previously. If homework is completed in less than the hour allocated for homework or if they have time to revise students should;

* Revise the plots and themes – mind maps, timelines etc.
* Revise characters – what happens to them, relationships with other characters.
* Create quotation cards and learn them
* Listen to audio versions of the texts.
* Use youtube, sparknotes, BBC bitesize etc
* Re-read the texts

**GCSE SCIENCE**

* Students take their exams at the end of Year 11.
* 2 x Biology
* 2 x Chemistry
* 2 x Physics
* Each paper is worth **16.7%** of the GCSE, is out of **70 marks** and is **1hr 15min** long

**Practical Skills in Science**

There are 21 required practicalsthat students have to carry out.

Questions about these practicals will be in the exams.

Analysis of data, variables, making predictions, linking to subject knowledge, graph drawing, calculations

**Information you have already been emailed by the science department**

* A link to the specification
* A second opportunity to buy the revision guide
* An opportunity to buy the corresponding workbook
* A list of the content covered in Year 9

**How to achieve in Science**

1. Learn the content

Science is a very content rich subject. We learn NEW content EVERY lesson.

Lessons are about understanding the content

Homework is set to begin the process of consolidating the learning

HOWEVER

* It is the work done at home, that is not set as homework, that really makes a difference.
* **The revision guide needs to be read. A LOT!**
* It needs to be read **before** each lesson, **after** each lesson and then **frequently** between the lessons

**In addition to the revision guide…**

* All students have a Doddle account.
* This contains a ‘resources’ section that has animations that teach the content.
* GCSE Bitesize contains AQA specific content, activities and tests.
* Access to kerboodle – an online textbook and resources

[http://www.kerboodle.com](http://www.kerboodle.com/)

**Help within school**

After school support has already begun.

* Science Café runs on a Tuesday and Thursday evening – there is a subject specialist present to help with all three Sciences
* Students should try to see their own teacher as they know them and their needs best, however any teacher will be happy to help.
* Students should attend this to start the revision of Year 9 content

**What can you do as a parent?**

Year 10 and 11 can be stressful times for some students and getting your child to commit to working at home can cause stress for everyone in the household. One tip for taking the stress out of continually nagging your child is to agree how time will be spent. Your child will need to accept that they will have to work at weekends. A grid like the one below can be useful. With your child, first write in all the things they have to do eg a football match or judo class etc. Then write in any family activities they will be taking part in eg visiting grandparents, a family trip to the cinema. Next write in any of their own social arrangements eg meeting friends. Then, looking at what time is left, write in what home study will be done and when. Encourage your child to put exact start times for when they will start homework. Students who use this kind of planning effectively also plan in things like TV viewing, XBOX time. Having the weekend planned in this way can also stop your child feeling that they have spent all weekend working, as it will be very clear that they have not.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Saturday | Sunday |
| Morning |  |  |
| Afternoon |  |  |
| Early Evening |  |  |
| Evening |  |  |

**Organisation is key**

Losing work can be stressful, especially if it contributes to a bigger piece of work. There needs to be a designated place where work will be kept at home. The minimum would be a big plastic box where all work is kept, but some students prefer a box file or folder for each subject. Never throw anything away until you have asked if it is needed. What looks to you like a scrap of paper and a few notes could be important. Forgetting to bring an exercise book will be a problem, especially if the lesson requires students to use previous work and writing on paper increases the chances of work getting lost, so encouraging your child to pack their bag the night before will help.

**Attendance**

Government research and guidance indicates that attendance below 96% will affect performance in exams and this has certainly been our own experience too. Missing lessons will often result in work having to be caught up on. Although parents have little control over the timing of hospital appointments and orthodontic appointments, it is important that other medical appointments such as routine dental appointments and doctor’s appointments that can be made after or before school, take place outside of school hours. No child should attend school and pass on bugs that we all really don’t want to get, but students will need to learn to cope with coming to school if they are feeling slightly ‘under the weather’.

**Homework**

There is no such thing as no homework! Students must do **a minimum** of one hour of work at home per subject per week. This may increase dramatically if your child is preparing for an assessment. If no specific task has been set or if students finish the set task in less than an hour, time must be spent reading through work on previous topics using a revision guide or their class notes.

**These are suggested roles you will need to fulfil to support your child;**

**Project manager**

It is not going to be possible for you to be there all the time when your child has homework, but doing the following things will help.

* Encourage your child to attend after school sessions.
* Have a ‘to do list’ pinned on the fridge. Each day transfer the homework to the ‘to do list’ and write the due date. In this way your child can see the homework list getting longer and it avoids the ‘oh it’s not due to next week’ comment students will often use and the sudden realisation that four pieces of homework are all due the next day.
* Talk about what will be done the next night after school, so even if you are not there your child knows what has been agreed will happen. Organising how time is spent at the weekends is especially important.

**Study buddy**

* Revise with your child. You don’t need to know the answers, test them on what is written in the revision guide.
* Get them to explain something to you
* Simply be nearby. Think about where it is best for your child to work. In their bedroom out of sight may not always be the best option. If they are working at the kitchen table you can check their progress. If after 10 minutes they have only written a few lines you will be able to see that all is not well and you will need to ask what the problem is. If they get stuck and stressed you may need to take charge. If your child is getting stressed about a piece of work or doesn’t understand a particular topic you may need to tell them to leave the work and go and see their teacher.
* Take them a drink or a treat. Keep encouraging, keep them focused.
* ‘Look after’ their phone for them whilst they are working. They must get into the habit of putting their phone somewhere else, even if they have to get up and check it after half an hour. If the phone is in the same room concentration will be affected.

**Agent (All celebrities, footballers and GCSE students need an agent!)**

* If you know there is a problem let us know
* If it’s a subject specific issue contact the subject teacher
* If the problem is of a more general nature contact the tutor or Mr Wyatt
* Do not assume that just because your child has told you they have spoken to a teacher that this is true

**Stationery purchaser**

There are all kinds of things your child will need when they revise, the things listed below will be useful and will be perfect stocking fillers this Christmas!

* Revision guides as specified by departments
* Printer paper
* Highlighter pens
* A4 notebooks for making notes
* Index cards
* Sticky notes

**Sources of information**

* Learning and Teaching (an area of the school network that can be accessed through the school website. Students will know how to access this and it is a place where teachers can put useful information)
* Show My Homework – please check this regularly
* Year 10 parent section of the school website. You will receive an email to let you know when any new information has been added.
* Information will be sent via email and parent text (please ensure that your contact details are kept up to date on our school records)