



23rd May 2018

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Y11 attendance during exam season

As I am sure you are well aware, external examinations can be a very stressful time for young people due to their desire to do the very best that they can. This is understandable and it is our job to ensure that we support them to not only do well, but to also manage this stress in the most effective way.

It has come to our attention that some students are feeling that the best way to manage this stress and improve their exam performance is to stay at home to revise instead of attending school, and therefore missing lessons with their teachers. Some of the arguments I have heard for this are:

- I can concentrate better at home.
- I get distracted in lessons.
- I want to spend all day on one subject.

I would agree that there is a time and a place for independent study at home, but I would very strongly disagree that this is effective in terms of replacement for time in front of a teacher. Already this week, I have heard three separate accounts (each different subjects) of students who got slightly stuck on a more obscure question that had been revisited by the class teacher in the lesson before the exam, only for those students to have stayed at home to revise. This resulted in them struggling in the exam whereas their class peers were able to tackle it confidently. The best revision strategies cannot replace the knowledge, expertise and experience of our staff who know what the 'curveballs' might be in the exam, and the little things that might trip up and otherwise capable student.

I would also strongly suggest that spending the whole day at home 'cramming' for one subject is not the best way to revise. A variety of subjects over the day, with fresh air breaks, and a diet of different people is a much healthier way to prepare. This is why being in school is much more beneficial. The school day is designed to be balanced and to also ensure that certain subjects are not forgotten about. We have also facilities for extra revision after school with subject specialists visiting to give 1-1 help to students who want/require it.

Please note that attendance is compulsory until Tuesday 12th June. The reason for this is because we know from long experience that the students who are in school, attending all lessons perform better in exams. This really is about us wanting the students to be as best prepared and as confident as they can possibly be when they enter the exam venue for every subject. We really do want them to be the very best that they can be and that is what we are

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here for. It is for this reason that we urge you to encourage your child to maintain full attendance, even if they might try to persuade you they are better off not being in school!

Many thanks for your understanding and support,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "E Mills". The signature is written in black ink and features a decorative flourish at the end of the word "Mills".

Mrs E. Mills
Deputy Headteacher