

Dear Parent/Carer,

As you will be aware, your child is about to enter their mock examination period starting on Monday 10th December through to Thursday 20th December. We take these examinations very seriously for a number of reasons and we hope you will support us in ensuring your child takes them seriously too so that they are a useful learning experience.

Firstly, the mock period allows us to ensure students are aware of the stringent examination regulations that must be adhered to in the external examination period this summer. Failure to comply with any of these can have serious repercussions, including having papers cancelled or whole GCSEs cancelled. This is why we insist the same regulations are in place for the mock examinations; reducing the risk that students could fail to meet any of the regulations in the summer. These regulations include:

- No mobile phones, iPODS, MP3 players, IWATCHes or any other products with an electronic communications/storage device or digital facility in the exam venue.
- No paper or form of notes in pockets.
- No writing on hands, arms or any other part of the body.
- All labelling must be removed from water bottles.
- A clear and transparent pencil case.
- No talking or communicating (including eye contact) once entering the exam venue.

Secondly, the mock period makes students aware of the good practice that is required to ensure their summer examination period runs smoothly. We insist on high standards during the mocks for this reason and so that students perform to the best of their ability. These expectations include:

- Knowing their exam number and centre number.
- Knowing which venue they are in for each exam, and knowing their seat number before they turn up for the exam.
- Making sure they are at the exam venue at least 15 minutes before the exam start time.
- Making sure they have the correct equipment with them for each exam.
- Using their time correctly during the exam.
- Leaving time to read over their answers to look for mistakes.

Finally, the mock examinations give teachers a clear understanding of the areas of strength and weakness in their subject area for each student. This allows them to see which topics/questions need to be revised in lessons, and enables them to help students achieve their best on an individual basis. This in turn gives parents/carers and students the information they need to best prepare and revise for the summer exams. The way the mock exam timetable runs, some students will sit an exam before other students taking the same subject who are in a different class. It is vitally important that no student tells another student what is on an exam paper, if they do, it can:

- skew the grade boundaries, lowering the grades of the students who sit the paper first- even though they might be better prepared than the students who have been told the questions.

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- mean teachers will not know the areas they need to cover with students to help them be prepared for the summer.
- falsify mock grades so they will not be reflective of where students are at in that subject and therefore will not be useful for parents/carers or students.

Also, the more revision your child does now, the more useful the mocks are because (a) they will help build up their knowledge for the summer (b) get valuable practice at the difficult skill of revision and (c) help themselves and their teachers identify which topics they really need help understanding as opposed to just can't quite remember. Please encourage your child to make use of the revision subject sessions in school; the revision room after school; and the Tassomai/GCSEpod sessions of a lunchtime – as well as completing their essential independent revision at home.

Ultimately, we want the mock exam period to be a positive and useful experience for your child. We want them to feel better prepared for their summer examinations and to be clear on what they need to focus on in each subject. All of the previous mentioned measures will help to ensure that this happens, and I hope you can support us by encouraging your child in all of these areas. We wish them the best of luck in all of their mock exams.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'E Mills', with a decorative flourish underneath.

Mrs E.Mills
Deputy Headteacher