



3rd April 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

As students approach the end of their A' Level and BTEC courses, I am writing to you to offer advice and guidance on how best to support your son/daughter as they approach their examinations. This is an incredibly stressful time and I am sure you are experiencing this first hand at home; a little stress is normal and can boost performance, but if you are in any way concerned, please do contact us.

Following the recent mock exams, the course content has now been completed, including the vast majority of coursework. Lessons this half term and next will be focused on revision and exam technique. To get the most out of these lessons, it is useful for students to have revised topics in advance, so time can be spent with staff on the sections they find the most challenging. Where additional revision sessions are on offer to students, these have been advertised and students are encouraged to attend. We continue to operate two silent study areas, the upper hexagon and S202, both of which remain no phone and headphone zones. We have recently changed the layout of these rooms to ensure students are completely focussed and have the quiet space to conduct meaningful revision during the school day.

Today, we have started our 40 day countdown to exams, sharing top tips for revision and counting down to the start of the exam season which begins on 13th May. Over the Easter holidays it is really important students use their time wisely and it is advised that they spend significant periods of time on revision. We suggest that each student studies during the holidays, as if they were in school, completing at least 6 hours of school work each day. Students work best when they take a 15 min break for each hour they work, as staring at books for hours is counterproductive and knowledge will not be committed to memory. We highly recommend that students spend the vast majority of their revision time testing themselves using past papers, multiple choice tests and writing out their notes from memory. Making cue cards and doing mind maps can be useful, but the emphasis should be on recalling material to identify where forgetting has occurred, allowing students to clearly identify where their gaps are.

Please do involve yourself in your son/daughter's revision, although you may not be able to help them with the topics, you can certainly make a huge difference by providing them with a quiet space to work, plenty of encouragement and the reassurance they need to keep working hard! It is equally important to make sure they take breaks and we strongly advise that they should drastically reduce any paid employment to no more than one short shift a week. Students often tell us they work best late into the evening; please deter them from doing this as this often impacts on their sleep patterns, they do need 8 hours of sleep each night.

Students return to school on Tuesday 23rd April for their final half term in sixth form. This is a very short half term, with only 23 school days before they officially leave on Friday 24th May. Following this date, students will be on study leave, although they are still welcome to come into school to revise and staff will still be available during lesson times. We will celebrate the end of their time with us with a final assembly on Friday 24th May, which will be held at a time to allow those in examinations that morning, to attend. Our final social event of the year will be our Prom, held at Statham Lodge on Thursday 4th July, for which tickets will be on sale shortly.

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The last few weeks have seen students really stepping up and they are now working much harder than ever. It is so important that this continues right up until the exams. The work they do now will positively impact their final grades and subsequent life choices. I didn't realise that offering tea and biscuits after school would make such a difference to their work ethic!

We are incredibly proud of all of our students and their achievements so far and we will be really sad to see them leave us. We have grown very fond of them indeed! We will continue to do everything we can to support your son/daughter during the remainder of his / her time in the sixth form, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or any member of the sixth form team if you have concerns of any kind.

Yours faithfully



H JENNINGS (Mrs),
Assistant Headteacher - Head of Sixth Form

Important dates for your diary

Friday 24th May – Year 13 Leavers' Day

Thursday 4th July – Year 13 Prom