



14 December 2016

Dear Parent/Guardian

**Year 8 Assessment Week – 4 - 10 January 2017**

I am writing to draw your attention to the Year 8 Assessment Week, due to take place from 4 to 10 January 2017, and what you can do to support your child in preparing for this.

Your son/daughter will be sitting the new GCSEs that have recently been introduced when they reach Year 11. These examinations not only have different subject content compared to the old GCSEs but also place a greater emphasis on performance in examinations and on the ability to recall information.

One way, we believe, to help prepare students for these is for them to become familiar with preparing for examinations so that they can explore different revision styles, write a revision plan, become familiar with the feeling of sitting examinations and how they can act on the feedback they are given afterwards. I want to reassure you this is not a pass or fail exercise and feedback will be provided by all teachers to students, together with work they will be able to complete to improve their grade in the future.

Most subjects will be doing an examination or written assessment with your child during this assessment week and they will take place in their normal lessons and rooms for those subjects. Subject teachers have been talking to the students about how they can revise and making revision plans. Subject teachers will also provide them with information about which topics they need to revise and the format of the assessment.

In addition, some simple guidance on how to revise over the Christmas holiday period follows at the end of this letter.

If you have further questions, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Johnson  
Deputy Headteacher

## How to revise- some basic ideas

**There are many ways you can revise;** everyone has different techniques. Some of them are: reading through notes you have made in classes, then re-writing them until they are memorised; using revision books; making mind maps and charts; using cue cards to write short condensed notes to make it easier to remember; making a voice recording of the information and playing it back over and over again. You have to find a method that works BEST for you.

- 1) **Active revision is much more effective than passive revision.** Passive revision is associated with reading notes, copying material even reducing long notes to short notes or revision cards. Active revision is concerned with **using** and **organising** material e.g.: doing and re-doing questions and exercises.
- 2) **Handwritten revision may be best** <http://www.nhs.uk/news/2011/01January/Pages/writing-versus-typing-for-learning.aspx>
- 3) **Prepare all your supplies.** The basic supplies you require may be notebooks, highlighter pens, coloured pencils and writing pens. You may also need items that are specific to particular subjects eg: a calculator for mathematics, a bilingual dictionary for languages, and the text for English Literature.
- 4) **Find a quiet place free from any distractions.** Think wisely about where you want to be - it can be any place that's right for you. Make sure you have sufficient space for revising as you may need to spread your work out. Ask people around you to keep noise to a minimum. Do not revise with a TV or music playing in the background as (a) you will be doing the assessment in silence so you will need to get used to working in silence. Finally, switch off your mobile phone, tablet and computer.
- 5) **Start off by getting your workbook from school and some paper-** get your exercise book or whatever contains the information etc. that you will be assessed on and have ready at hand what you will use to help you use it to do the revision.
- 6) **Start on the more difficult subjects** – or the bits of a subject, or topic that you find the trickiest. This way you have more time to tackle them.
- 7) **Take short breaks in between revising.** You shouldn't work for more than thirty minutes without a break, but keep breaks to a maximum of 10 minutes. Use the break to refresh yourself and do something completely different.
- 8) **If you find yourself stumped,** write down exactly what you find difficult and ask someone reliable, such as a teacher, for help. If you're strapped for time, you may want to search on the internet, but it may help to limit yourself as you can easily get distracted by other things on the internet such as social networking websites.
- 9) **You don't have to revise around the clock.** Make sure you revise without distraction but don't forget to socialise and relax. Study different subjects on different days and don't stick to just what you're good at or already know.