



Year 11 Parent/Carer Survival Guide

Please find enclosed important dates, advice
and subject information



KEY DATES AND EVENTS FOR YEAR 11 STUDENTS

January	Booster lunchtime and after school classes begin Personalised intervention starts in tutor and PSCHE time Revision workshops on offer at lunchtime
February 12-16 February	Additional mock exams in English and Maths Some targeted classes in February half term
9 March	Deadline for all practical work to be completed (Textiles, Resistant Materials and Engineering)
27 March 29 March	English revision day Interim reports sent home. Folder work deadline for Textiles, Resistant Materials and Engineering
1-13 April 23 April	Easter Revision School Art exams start
8 May 14 May	Art books due in and GCSE Art Exhibition All other exams and personalised timetable begins
22 June	Year 11 Prom
25 August	Result day

A SUMMARY OF REVISION ADVICE FOR STUDENTS

Revising is tough. It takes self-discipline and is a skill which can be improved. The key focus at the moment is for Year 11 students to practice and find what best helps them to learn and remember information. The crucial principles for revision which we communicate and reinforce with students are:

Structure

Revision needs to be organised and will be easier if students use specific techniques and try to establish a pattern for their independent studies.

Routine

If students can get into the habit of revision, it's much easier to do. A common mistake is to plan to do too much revision and then feel like a failure when this isn't completed (start small and build up).

Short and frequent

Another mistake is to plan to revise for several hours in one go. Again, this just sets yourself up to fail. Students should aim for the 'little and often' approach, trying to get into a routine where they use, for example, the half hour after tea to do some dedicated revision Monday to Thursday.

Balance

Students need to keep their balance and to stay healthy. Continuing to do some exercise is vital and sport will help expend stress. Likewise, social activity and having some fun is crucial to relieve stress.

ACTIVE!

The most important principle of all is to make revision active. If we just read our notes, most of the information will not be retained. If we can transform our notes into alternative information – summaries, concept maps, pictures or flash cards – we are far more likely to retain information. The use of colour and images to aid memory has been shown to support many of us in remembering targeted information.

General Advice for Parents

You will know your son/ daughter far better than we as teachers ever will. Some Year 11 students need constant monitoring and pushing; others need encouragement and emotional support; many are already doing what they need in order to prepare for this year. Everyone is different and we do our best to try and work with these differences, but the following is some generic advice for all parents:

1. Provide the tools for the job

Supporting your child with the necessary books and resources can help them to get started, and it stops them from using a lack of pens or paper as an excuse.

2. Be a revision partner

Listen carefully to your child while they are explaining a revision topic to you. Ask them questions to test their knowledge and challenge them on the subject content. You should also be an official timekeeper. Ensure your child doesn't do too much or too little revision and build in breaks for food and drink.

3. Check the work

If your daughter or son isn't yet motivated or organised enough to work hard out of lessons, encourage and give them incentives to do so (these don't have to cost you). Please encourage your child to come to the revision sessions where they need a boost or support.

4. Communicate with us

Please check Show My Homework and our website where we will post details of what's on offer and what students should be doing. Please liaise with your child's teachers if you have any queries or concerns.

5. Plan and encourage relaxation time

It is imperative that your child maintains a balance while revising. Children still need a social life – up to a point, of course! Work with your child so that the amount of revision they do is realistic.

6. Understand the stress of revision

The atmosphere in the home needs to be one of quiet and calm, as far as possible, so that students are able to revise without interruption. Also, it is worth considering giving them something to look forward to when the examinations are over – a holiday or a trip to town or the beach - something that will act as an incentive to spur on all of their hard work. Similarly, helping them plan for next year, whether this is onto A-Levels or onto a specific college course or Apprenticeship can act as a significant source of motivation.

REVISION GUIDES

For each subject, we recommend particular revision guides for those students and parents who want to purchase extra revision materials. Most students have these already. If not please note the following important points:

- In many subjects, there are a variety of different guides suggested. Please don't feel you need to buy them all. It is really important that students talk to teachers about which guide, if any, they are recommended to buy. In maths, for example, students will know or will be told whether to buy Higher or Foundation materials, in English Literature, they should check which texts they are doing.
- Students should concentrate on areas in which they are weaker or feel challenged, rather than feeling they need to buy revision books for all subjects.
- If your child doesn't have a revision guide for a particular subject and would like one, please contact the subject teacher and he or she will advise which one to purchase.

EXTRA SUPPORT IN SCHOOL

Some students will need some extra support, and we try to allocate this as fairly and helpfully as we can, maximising all of the resources we have.

Emotional Support

There are many staff in school who students can turn to if they feel overwhelmed. There is an anxiety and worries café which takes place in the Integrated Health Centre at lunchtimes. In addition yoga runs after school on a Thursday evening which is proven to help reduce anxiety and stress levels. We really encourage students to talk about their feelings and not to bottle things up. If you feel your child is becoming overly anxious please contact their tutor, we are here to help.

Mentoring

Some students who may be struggling to motivate themselves or who need specific advice to revise have been given a one-to-one mentor who sees them regularly, sometimes for a few weeks and sometimes for longer.

Subject Intervention

There are bespoke sessions run in tutor and PSHCE time for students who we think will benefit from short, intensive extra lessons in Maths and English. Other students are given then opportunity to use this time to revise for other specific subjects they feel they need to focus on.

Booster Sessions and Revision Classes

We run a wide variety of extra, booster sessions to support students in lunchtimes and after school. Some of these sessions have already begun but they begin in earnest after the February half term. There will also be some sessions offered (some by invitation only) to students in the half terms and Easter holidays. The sessions are often organised by each subject to cover specific topics and skills. These details will change and be amended as we progress through to the summer, so this information is not all contained here. The sessions will be advertised on our website under Students/Year 11 Revision.

'The Works' revision club

This is a revision club, specifically for Year 10 and 11 is on every night after school from 3.15-4.15pm. These sessions are designed for students who may struggle to get down to revision once they get home and are aimed at building resilience and study skills. All students are welcome to attend whilst for others this will form a compulsory part of their final few weeks of education.

CORE SUBJECTS OVERVIEW

Finally, please see the following pages for some specific advice and details concerning the Maths, English and Science GCSEs.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE GCSEs

- All students will study GCSE English Language and GCSE English Literature (four exams – 2 for Literature and 2 for Language).
- Both subjects are now treated equally, they are as important as each other and there are no coursework or controlled assessment components.
- All students sit the same exams, regardless of English set.
- For the two literature exams, students have to study a Shakespeare play ('Romeo and Juliet'), a modern play ('Blood Brothers'), a novel ('A Christmas Carol') and a range of poems collected in an anthology.
- They don't have any texts provided in the literature exams, so they need to know these well.

How to Succeed: students need to listen carefully and practise regularly. Completing their homework and revision are essential. They should learn key quotations from their literature texts and look carefully at their previous work and the teacher's feedback.

If they or you as parents are not sure, please ask for help, or find out further information through the following:

- Specifications and texts, which will be available as an AQA digital anthology for home use: [aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)
- GCSE Pod – go to English Language and Literature podcasts
- General writing skills: <http://www.englishbiz.co.uk/>
- New GCSE BBC Bitesize - interactive revision: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/zckw2hv>
- Sparknotes - detailed study guides: <http://www.sparknotes.com/sparknotes/>
- Bibliomania - online texts and study guides: <http://www.bibliomania.com/bibliomania-static/index.html>
- English resources by the late Andrew Moore (ignore the legacy Specification details) <http://www.universalteacher.org.uk/>

MATHEMATICS GCSE

- Students sit 3 papers: one non-calculator and two using a calculator.
- Students will be entered either for Higher (Grades 4-9) or Foundation (Grades 1-5).
- We will enter the tier in students' best interests and will finalise entries in late January.

How to Succeed:

- Self-belief – don't give up and be positive
- Correct equipment
 - Calculator – CASIO FX 85
 - Black Pens and Pencil
 - Ruler, Protractor and Compasses
- PRACTISE
 - 20-30 minutes per night (in the run up to the exam)
 - Use GCSE Practice Book and Practice Papers – as many as possible!
 - Use online resources: mymaths.co.uk; Mr Barton Maths; PiXL Maths App!
 - Ask for help!

Great websites:

www.corbettmaths.com - lots of videos and practice questions with answers

www.onmaths.com - online GCSE papers and other revision tools (it is free to sign up)

SCIENCE GCSEs

- Students either do Trilogy or separate Sciences:
 - 2 Grade 6s are better than 3 Grade 5s
 - Trilogy does enable access to A level sciences
 - Both routes involve exams in Biology, Chemistry and Physics
 - Both routes involve students sitting six papers, two in each discipline.
- Students will be entered either for Higher (Grades 4-9) or Foundation (Grades 1-5).
- We will enter the tier in students' best interests and will finalise entries in late January.

How to Succeed:

- Keep ALL exercise books organised and in a safe place
- Purchase the revision guides offered by the science department
- Keep a glossary of key scientific terms and test key words
- Prepare for exams (9 for Triple Science, 4 for Science A and Additional Science) by completing assignments set in Year 11
- Discuss science based issues in the news
- 'Little and often' learning
- Keep testing key words.

USEFUL GENERAL WEBSITES

For subject specifications and past papers:

www.aqa.org.uk

www.edexcel.com

www.ocr.org.uk

www.wjec.org.uk

Homework: www.showmyhomework.com

(follow the link on the school website)

General

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebiteize

www.studyzones.com

www.s-cool.co.uk

www.schoolsnet.com

www.gcse.com

www.revision-notes.co.uk/GCSE

www.revisiontime.com

www.getrevising.co.uk

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your son or daughter's progress, or what he/she should be doing to succeed, please contact your child's relevant teacher, his/her tutor, the Head of Department or Head of Year, Mr Riley. If you are in any doubt, concerned or are not sure who to go to, please contact Wendy Birkbeck wbirkbeck@looe.cornwall.sch.uk or Kate Jackman kjackman@looe.cornwall.sch.uk

GCSE Pod

Every student has a login to GCSE Pod which can be used at home or in school. There are podcasts to listen to, watch, and make notes from for most of their subjects.

This is a particularly good resource for those students who learn best visually.

The logo for GCSE Pod, featuring the text 'gcsepod' in a colorful, lowercase font with a '2.0' version indicator in a small grey box to the right. Below the text is the tagline 'education anywhere' in a smaller, black font.

