



2 December 2020

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Year 11 December update

Dear Parent/Carer,

With us moving towards the end of term I thought it would now be a good time to update parents, carers and students on all we are doing to ensure the best possible outcomes for our young people.

Reports

We are currently in the process of collecting and checking the latest assessment and progress data for all Year 11 students. These grades are based on classwork, homework and formal mock exam-style assessments completed in class this term. Once checked, individual progress sheets will be made available on **Edulink**. We expect this will be by **the of term** and we shall inform you when these become available. The reports will give current and predicted grades in addition to grades measuring their attitude to learning.

Mocks

The **two-week mock exam** period in exam venues, starts on **1st February**. We have chosen this period for several reasons which I would like to outline below. When the country went into lock down schools were faced with many challenges. These included working remotely, ensuring all pupils were safe and ensuring that we were supporting student's health and wellbeing. It was an incredibly difficult time for many staff and students. Work was placed online, and students were responsible for working through it.

Returning in September, we and many other schools felt the number one focus should be on ensuring students are safe and in school learning to make sure students could keep up with the curriculum. A mock period just a few weeks later, having not been in lessons since March, would have heightened many students' anxieties and therefore the exam period would not have achieved the outcomes intended for staff or students. We felt strongly that students for the first term would be best covering content and getting back into the routine of school. We have spent time revisiting work and conducting lots of mini tests to build up their confidence on the knowledge they need to remember. We have also started to build up their confidence with study skills again such as revising. They spent a great session with a company called Elevate who reminded them and taught them how to approach preparing for these exams.



When students do have the opportunity to sit their Mock exams they would have completed more of the course, feel more positive about the exam period and it will then allow teachers and students to drill down into the areas of weakness so we can support them in closing learning gaps.

Feedback and PLC's

Year 11 have recently completed a formal mock style assessment. Students were given whole class feedback and then given the chance to reflect on their areas of weakness. These areas of weakness are what we call **Personal Learning Checklists (PLCs)**. We expect students to go away and work on these areas of weaknesses using the resources identified by both students and teachers.

This cycle will be repeated when students complete their mocks and the students as a result over time should start to develop their skills in those weaker areas.

Parents evenings

Since March we have not been able to have visitors on site, this has presented a new challenge with relation to parent's evenings. We are currently trialling an online parents evening with our 6th form which we aim to use for our smaller year groups. We are planning to have a **parents evening week commencing 11th January**.

6th form/college/next steps

By the end of this term at the very latest, Year 11 students should have applied for their Post-16 Pathway. I am pleased to report that we have had a **record amount** of 6th form applications and if parents or students do have any questions about their next steps do not hesitate to contact myself, Miss Bolton or Mrs Sides (Director of 6th form). All information regarding 6th form can be found on the website.

School day / Interventions

At Queensbury we currently have a staggered school day. This is to ensure there is no crossing of the bubbles and to keep all at Queensbury safe. Students do have the same amount of learning time as they have had previously but start at 10am instead. We have found many of **the students more alert** and engaged at this time which has meant they are making the most of their learning opportunities.

Now we are clearer on which gaps students need to work on, departments are currently in the process of identifying key students for **interventions which will be mostly run in the mornings before 10am**. Those students will be contacted directly by the member of staff. We are working to collate an overview of the sessions available and this will be communicated in due course.

Work at home

Homework will be regularly set by subject teachers to support student's revision which relies on a student's ability to work independently. As mentioned earlier in this letter, the Academy invested in Elevate who are UK leaders for developing independent study skills in young people. Parents were also invited to access this content in and find out how to best support at home. I would expect a Year 11 student to be completing at least **one hour of personal revision each evening**. This will help to ensure they cement their knowledge and understanding of those subject areas. Students should look to improve their weaker areas (PLC's) that have been identified after their last formal assessments.



Miss Bolton sent a Parent Mail before October half term of the GCSE Changes including the exam boards and the structure of the GCSE please refer to this to aid conversations with your children. We are currently in the process of gathering resources such as past papers, revision guide recommendations etc into one central area and will update you on this in due course but for now I recommend the following websites alongside past papers and using revision guides.

[GCSE Learning and Revision | GCSEPod](#)

[Free Homework & Revision for A Level, GCSE, KS3 & KS2 \(senecalearning.com\)](#)

[MathsWatch](#)

[Maths Genie - Free Online GCSE and A Level Maths Revision](#)

If you do have any issues with log in's, please contact me directly for GCSE Pod queries and your son/daughter's maths teacher for Maths Watch.

Homework Club

Miss Bolton sent a Parent Mail before half term introducing the new **Homework Club on Tuesdays and Fridays, 8.45am-9.45am** in a computer room (W22). This time can be spent completing homework tasks or revising.

Year 11

We are **very pleased** with how Year 11 have settled this term and having been in many classrooms it is pleasing to see every student working hard to achieve their personal best. With only a handful of school weeks left until the mock exams I am sure students will continue to work hard in order to close the gaps in their learning. They will then feel more confident about completing their exams after Christmas.

If you do have any further questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Wishes,

Mr Dumpleton

