

Friday 2nd February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Year 11 Mock Examination Preparation

The final academic 'five months' of secondary schooling for our Year 11 students is vital and following the last mock examinations in November, I would invite you to read about the next steps we are taking, and how you can be involved to further support your child in securing the best possible outcomes.

This letter will go through:

- Period 6 expectations
- Exam sessions over February half term
- The mock exam timetable
- The outline for the mocks on 1st March, and lunch arrangements
- Essential equipment reminders
- Study club opportunity

You will be aware that since Year 10, we have offered a dedicated period 6 lesson for each option subject to add further specialist teaching in the subject areas. These subjects run until 4.00pm. These lessons are essential to ensure that the curriculum can be consolidated and revised prior to the summer examinations. We urge you to support us in ensuring your child stays to each of these sessions and that no external extra-curricular activities or appointments are arranged to take place until after this time. In the rare case that a doctor's appointment (or similar) is required, please can you make sure that you provide us with the confirmation message so we know there is a legitimate reason for non-attendance.

The period 6 timetable is outlined here:

Week B (beginning 5th February)

- Tuesday – GCSE PE (**both Option groups**)

Week A (beginning 12th February)

- Monday – no sessions
- Tuesday – Option C (**Business, Engineering, French, Geography, RE**)
- Wednesday – Option B (**Business, Drama, French, History, Media**)
- Thursday – Option A (**Art, Geography, RE, Spanish**)
- Friday – Option D (**Art, Engineering, Geography, History, Music, Business**)

These sessions are an integral part of the school day and pupils are expected to attend as we make the final push towards the examinations. Over the next 13 weeks, this will give your child **52 extra hours of tuition**, which is equivalent to over two extra weeks of school. Purchasing this much privately with a qualified professional would cost at least £2000, and we are providing this for free.

In addition to these sessions, we will also be offering a number of revision sessions across the February half term holiday. At present, these are still being finalised with staff but please be aware that your child will be invited in to attend revision sessions for the subjects they study. Again, we hope that there is great attendance at these sessions as this will support the mock examinations as well as the final GCSEs.

The mock timetable can be found below:

	9.00 am	11.25 am	13.50 pm
Monday 26th February	English Language P1	Geography P1	Biology P1
Tuesday 27th February	Maths P1 (Non-Calculator)	History P1 (Medicine)	Chemistry P1
Wednesday 28th February	Physics P1	GCSE PE P1 History P2 (Germany)	Business Studies
Thursday 29th February	English Literature P1	Maths Paper 2 (Calculator)	RE P1 (Islam & Christianity) NFER tests
Friday 1st March	English Literature P2	Maths P3 (Calculator)	Chemistry P2
Monday 4th March	English Language P2	Geography P2	Biology P2
Tuesday 5th March	Physics P2	History P3	GCSE PE P2 Drama
Wednesday 6th March	RE P2 (Thematic Studies)	Engineering	Media (clip)
Thursday 7th March	Music (listening)	Catch ups	Catch ups
Friday 8th March	Catch ups	Catch ups	Catch ups
Monday 11th March	Catch up (trip)	Catch up (trip)	Catch up (trip)

With the mock timetable, please be aware that there may be some occasions where scholars finish after 3.05pm. We always aim to get the examinations started promptly after lunch but the timings of the papers plus deviation for foundation / higher tier and extra time for some scholars will impact on finish times. It is important to note that the exams are still going ahead on the 1st March. For the remainder of the school, this is a training day, but for Year 11 they will be in and continue with their mocks. Year 11 will be expected to arrive at the normal school time (before 8.35am) and will still need to attend in full school uniform.

The canteen will be open but will be operating a smaller menu. Any scholar who is in receipt of free school meals will still receive their meal. To support catering numbers, please can you follow the link here <https://forms.office.com/e/NqbM4Uzri0> to let us know if you anticipate your child will need a school lunch on Friday 1st March. Please note that this form will close on Friday 23rd of February.

This is not the first set of mock examinations for our Year 11, so hopefully they still have all of the essential equipment outlined below. Please use this as a prompt to check that your child has everything that is needed. Every scholar being fully equipped allows for a prompt start to each exam and doesn't cause unnecessary panic. Essential exam equipment:

- Clear pencil case



- Scientific calculator
- 2 x black pens (not gel pens)
- Pencil
- Compass
- Protractor
- Rubber
- Ruler
- Clear water bottle of water (any labels must be removed)

Finally, I would like to introduce a 'Study club' for Year 11. This is an opportunity to provide access to silent independent study for scholars, whilst having access to staff, computers and resources and will run every afternoon from 3.05pm to 4.30pm every Tuesday – Friday. Initially you can opt in to have a space for your child, but following the mocks in February this may become compulsory for some scholars. The rationale behind study club, is that we know not all scholars have access to a quiet, designated study space at home. We also know that some scholars prefer to keep school and home separate, and this gives the opportunity for our Year 11 to complete all their work here, knowing that they can then come home and relax. Please can you email me directly, if this is something that you and your child wish to sign up for, and which afternoons you would like to opt into. This will start from Tuesday 6th February but will not run on Thursday 8th due to a Parent/Carer consultation evening. Whilst it is helpful for planning staffing to know in advance that your child will attend, scholars will not be turned away and will be allowed to contact you from study club to make you aware they will be late home.

We know how stressful these next few months can be for Year 11. It is important to remember that it is perfectly normal for your child to feel nervous or anxious around exam times, but if you do get to a point where you are worried, please do reach out to us or your GP for support. You can support your child by helping them to create a revision timetable and / or going through revision materials of flashcards with them. At this point in the year, on top of homework, I would expect that most scholars are completing between 1 and 2 hours of revision per evening. Whilst revision sessions are taking place, though it will not be popular, asking your child to leave their phone / device / gaming platform with you to help prevent distraction. They do not need it for their revision and it will allow for their revision to be more focussed and productive. I also recommend an end of day routine to support wind-down, focussed around something they enjoy. Plenty of food or snacks and sensible bedtimes (again – without phones) will help prevent extra stress during exam periods.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support. If there is anything else you need, please do not hesitate to get in touch with myself or Miss Garbould.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Foley
Vice Principal
Fizz.foley@astreaernulf.org

