

WS/CNA/2012

15 May 2017



Clifford Moor Road
Boston Spa
West Yorkshire
LS23 6RW

Dear Parent/Carer

GCSE exams are underway and students are heading into a busy period that will prove stressful for many of them. We are doing a great deal to support both their academic preparation but also to ensure we look after their wellbeing. This letter is to explain what we are doing and to make some suggestions as to how parents and carers can support as well.

Revision and Revision Timetable

Year 11 students enjoyed a two hour presentation on revision strategies and preparing for exams and have been issued with a revision timetable which is attached to this letter for your information. We believe that students are best prepared by their teachers for exams and always aim to provide as much contact as possible in the run up to and during the exam period. Teachers will deliver high quality revision lessons and be on hand to address issues and misconceptions straight away. We have included some periods of home study as well; however supervised study rooms are available for those students who prefer to revise in school. These revision sessions are the ideal way for students to prepare for their exams but of course do not replace revision at home. Teachers have been asked to set specific tasks to support revision and to help students chunk down their learning into manageable bits. These tasks could include exam questions, making revision cards, mind mapping or learning key vocabulary.

Health and Well Being

This is a stressful time – for parents as well as students and we are very aware of the need to support students during the exam period. Tutor time intervention lessons in Maths, English and Science have ceased and students will spend the mornings in tutor groups. Tutors will work with students using the PiXI Power to Perform resources which cover everything from time management to healthy eating and importantly, getting the right amount of sleep.

How you can help:

Having a stressed and anxious teenager in the house can be difficult but there are lots of ways you can support them though this period.



1. Time management

One of the most important things you can do is encourage them to plan their time sensibly and to take proper breaks. Revision is best done in 20-30 minute chunks, certainly no longer than an hour without a short break of 5-10 minutes. Their revision plans should include breaks, time for TV, sport or other activities. The Prepare to Perform booklet students will receive from tutors includes a daily planner to help organise a balance between revision and rest.

2. Sleep

Don't underestimate the importance of enough sleep. About 7-8 hours of sleep a night is needed for students to be at their best.

3. Eating

A decent breakfast on the day of the exams is essential, but a balanced diet throughout the exam period will help maintain energy and concentration levels. Top exam day breakfasts include porridge, eggs, whole-grain bread or low sugar muesli. A smoothie is good idea for anyone who can't face loads of food first thing in the morning. Bananas are a brilliant pre-exam snack and water is essential to stay well hydrated. Encourage your child to carry a bottle of water with them and to take one into the exam. The Prepare to Perform booklet contains lots of healthy eating ideas. Our partners at PiXI have worked with celebrity chef Mark Lloyd to create healthy family friendly recipes that will help boost energy and concentration during the exam period. These are attached here for you.

4. Exercise

Encourage your child to be active during the exam period. Physical activity boosts memory, improves concentration and reduces stress. If they are already involved in a sport there is no reason for them to stop altogether because of exams-although busy training schedules may have to be adapted to make room for revision. For those who don't participate in a particular sport or activity, physical activity could be as simple as a 20 minute walk.

5. Equipment

A decent pen can make all the difference in an exam. A rollerball or fineliner will be easier to write with than a biro. Exam pens must be black ink. Stabilo do an exam grade pen for about £1.20, or a pack of 5 Mitsubishi Uniball pens are available from Amazon for around £4. Other things that might be useful would be a pack of highlighters, some post-its for revision notes (encourage your child to stick these in places they see a lot) and index cards. These items are all available from supermarkets and are relatively inexpensive.

Above all I think patience and a sense of humour will be vital in getting through the next few weeks! Please don't hesitate to contact school – either the class teacher if it is a subject issue, or Mr Cooke if it is a more general wellbeing issue, if you need some advice or have any questions.

Yours faithfully



Mrs G Westerman
Deputy Headteacher