

3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to a YR11 study support session at Jarrow School. This will be taking place in the main hall on **Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018 between 5.30 and 7pm**. The aim of the session is to provide you with information and techniques to support your child through the most important time in their education to date. A free revision resource pack will be provided to every child who's parent/carer attends. Food and drinks will be served from 5.15pm

The contents that will be covered during the session are listed below:

1. How to motivate your child
2. Revision techniques for success
3. How to raise your child's achievement
4. Exam preparation

This will be the fourth time we have delivered this session and parents who have previously attended have commented that:

"It should be compulsory that all parents attend the session"

"Vital information that will help support their child"

"As parents we will now change the routine before exams and how my child revises"

We believe that every student matters and, to this end, we gear what we do to meeting the needs of every individual. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to contact me to arrange an alternative time to visit. If you have previously attended and want to attend again then please feel free, however the material is the same.

Yours sincerely,



Mr P. Atkinson  
Assistant Head Teacher



Mrs A. Elgood  
Head of Year 11

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REPLY SLIP – STUDY SUPPORT SESSION – WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2018

Name of Student:.....Tutor Group.....

I/We\* shall/shall not be attending

Signature (Parent/Carer):.....Date .....

### **Introduction**

It is not unusual for students and their parents/carers to find the exam period and the time leading up to it daunting. Feelings of trepidation and anxiety are common at this time. Exams are an inevitable part of school life and we want to help make this time as stress free as possible. This guide may help you to help your child through this time.

You do not have to be an educational expert to help your child and life does not need to stop just change for a short time. We hope to answer some commonly asked questions however if you have a question which we do not answer then please ask it of us. Some useful contact details can be found later in this booklet.

### **Mock Exam Times**

Additional mock exams will take place between 26<sup>th</sup> November and 7<sup>th</sup> December 2018. These will be an opportunity to officially prepare for the actual GCSE exams in the summer so please ensure your child takes them seriously and improves from the current mock results. The actual GCSE exams will take place in May and July 2019. Students will receive a personalised exam timetable which informs them when their exams are. There are no exams during the half term holiday at the end of May and some "time off" is good, however, school will be open for revision sessions and revision at home is essential. Please allow time for this revision and if possible plan your activities around it.

### **What can you do to help?**

- Recognise the importance of these exams and how much study time they will require
- If possible avoid giving your child too many chores allow them that time to revise
- Help your child to get organised with a revision plan
- Create a quiet place to study where work can be safely left
- Make sure your child has everything they need to revise well
- If possible keep noise and disturbance to a minimum
- Encourage a healthy balanced lifestyle which includes time to relax
- Offer praise and encouragement and ask how things are going
- Encourage your child to move on after each exam and not dwell on what has past
- Remind them this is short term and the exams will come to an end

### **Preparing for Exams**

School provides the expertise and resources which will help your child acquire the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to do well in their subjects. You can help by ensuring your child attends school as much as possible so they are with us to learn the content of the subject. If your child is not able to attend school please ensure they catch up on missed work so they have the information they need when revising.

Ensure your child has everything they need to revise. Check they have all of the notes and texts required to support their revision. If they are missing anything encourage them to speak to their teacher. Refer to the "Useful Revision Resources" table later in this booklet for more information.

Provide your child with the equipment they need to aid their revision and keep it stocked throughout this time. An argument over a misplaced pen is not worth the upset. The following items will come in useful:

- Pens and pencils
- Highlighter pens
- Coloured pens
- Scientific calculator
- Post-it notes
- Notebooks, paper, index cards
- Access to a computer and printer
- Folders and files
- Past exam papers

Your child will be doing a lot of their revision at home so it is especially important that they are given the space and time to revise. We appreciate that this can be difficult as normal life still goes on. As a minimum your child will need a quiet, preferably private place, to study. A desk and chair in a bedroom is good but a dining table works just as well. The work space needs to be big enough for all their books and equipment. Your child will probably need access to a computer and printer and you may want to provide a lamp and clock.

In a busy home quiet time is sometimes difficult to find. It will really encourage your child to settle into their revision, especially if they are not able to study in a private room, if everyone helps to create a quiet space. Maybe you could encourage everyone to have some quiet time reading, doing homework, catching up on emails or browsing the internet. Some low level background music may help your child to concentrate but too much will be a distraction and affect the amount of information they are taking in.

### **Revision Time**

Revision is essential – organised revision is even better.

It sounds obvious but don't let your child leave their revision until the last minute. Last minute "cramming" isn't effective and causes stress. A well thought out revision plan will help organise time and provide a framework to focus the mind. Of course no one would suggest that your child spends all of their time revising however they should know that the best results are achieved when time and effort are invested.

If your child starts their revision well in advance of their exams they are more likely to feel confident and prepared for their exams. They can then devote more time to topics they have found more challenging.

Check whether your child has a revision plan in place and if not offer to help them create one. Remember to include time off from revision and important events such as birthdays. So, how much time should be spent revising? Every child is different but the following guidelines may help:

- 2 to 3 hours of revision per night over four school nights and,
- 5 to 6 hours over the weekend

20 to 30 minute sessions with a short break between each session are most effective but it will depend on the individual on what works best. Regular breaks of 5 to 10 minutes will relax your child and help them digest the information. It's worth revising a few specific topics at a time for each subject and going over the main points several times. Encourage your child to review each topic they've revised 48 hours after their first revision session and then again a week later, a month later, the following month and just before their exam.

It may help to divide each day into three sections:

- On a school day; 1 section for school, 1 section for revision and 1 section for relaxation
- On a non-school day; 2 sections for revision and 1 section for relaxation

The format of a revision plan is down to personal choice but it will need to be rigid enough to focus the mind whilst being flexible enough to change as your child moves closer to their exams. The following examples may help:

Weekly Plan Example 1:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday		Saturday	Sunday
Lunch	GRAPHICS FOLDER		MATHS		ICT	TIME 11- 12	EXAM PRACTICE HISTORY	PE
After School			HISTORY (1HR)	SCIENCE (1HR)		TIME 1-2	EXAM PRACTICE SCIENCE	FOOTBALL MATCH
Home	SCIENCE (1HR) ENG LIT (1HR)	PE (1HR) MATHS (1HR)	GEOGRAPHY (1HR)	ENG (1HR) SPANISH (1HR)	GOING OUT	TIME 3-4	GOING OUT	GEOGRAPHY CASE STUDY

### Weekly Plan Example 2:

	8.40AM-2.35PM	2.35PM-3.45PM	5-6PM	6-7PM	7-8PM
MONDAY	SCHOOL	REVISION CLASS IN SCHOOL	TEA	KEEP FIT CLASS	CHEMISTRY
TUESDAY	SCHOOL	TIME OFF	TEA	REVIEW NOTES & BIOLOGY	MEDIA STUDIES
WEDNESDAY	SCHOOL	REVISION CLASS IN SCHOOL	TEA	REVIEW NOTES & ENGLISH	TIME OFF
THURSDAY	SCHOOL	REVISION CLASS IN SCHOOL	TEA	MATHS	ENGLISH
FRIDAY	SCHOOL	TIME OFF	TEA	NIGHT OFF	NIGHT OFF
SATURDAY	REVIEW NOTES & SPANISH	HISTORY	TIME OFF	PHYSICS	TIME OFF
SUNDAY	REVIEW NOTES & GEOGRAPHY	REVIEW NOTES & GEOGRAPHY	SWIMMING	TIME OFF	TIME OFF

### Month Plan Example:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
2	3 C1 - 3 x 20 mins B1 - 2 x 20 mins Training - 2 hours	4 C1 - 2 x 20 mins B1 - 3 x 20 mins	5 B1 - 3 x 20 mins P1 - 2 x 20 mins Training - 2 hours	6 B1 exam Presentation Eve	7 P1 - 3 x 20 mins C1 - 2 x 20 mins	8 C1 - 3 x 20 mins Maths - 30 mins Match 3 hours
9 C1 - 3 x 20 mins P1 - 2 x 20 mins	10 C1 exam P1 - 3 x 20 mins English - 30 mins Training - 2 hours	11 Maths Deadline P1 - 3 x 20 mins	12 P1 exam English 2 x 30 mins Training - 2 hours	13 English Deadline Friends Birthday	14 Art - 2 hours	15 Tech - 2 hours Match 3 hours
16 Maths - 3 x 20mins	17 Maths - 2 x 30 mins Training - 2 hours	18 Art - 2 hours Maths Deadline	19 Tech - 2 hours Training - 2 hours	20 Art Deadline Tech Deadline	21 Family Day Out	22 English 2 x 30 mins Match 3 hours
23 Maths - 3 x 20 mins	24 Maths - 2 x 30 mins Training - 2 hours	25 Mums Birthday Meal Maths Deadline English 2 x 20 mins	26 English 2 x 30 mins Training - 2 hours	27 English Deadline	28	29 Match 3 hours
30						

Reading is generally not enough; making brief notes, charts and maps helps them remember. It may also be helpful for your child to revise with a friend so they can go over key facts together, test each other's understanding and provide support to each other.

Your child may appreciate your input in testing them or allowing them to explain key information to you or with the timing of a practice paper. Past exam papers are a great source of relevant questions.

A shared break together may be all that is needed.

### **During the Exam Period**

It is very important that your child is not only well prepared for their exams but also healthy and happy during their exams.

Encourage your child to eat healthily during revision and exams. Have plenty of healthy snacks in the fridge and provide healthy, nutritious food at regular intervals. Fresh fruit and vegetables are ideal, especially brain boosting food such as bananas. At family meal times encourage your child to take a break from revision and join the family. This is an important time to catch up and have a break from books and the computer.

Caffeine should be avoided as it dehydrates the brain and can impede sleep whilst water is essential as it hydrates the brain and makes it work better.

Regular exercise can also help your child. A brisk walk around the block can help clear the mind before the next revision session, get the oxygen flowing to the brain and helps relaxation and reduces stress.

We all know a late night affects the way we feel the next day. Encourage your child to go to bed at a reasonable time during their exams. They may be feeling particularly nervous the night before an exam so encourage them to stop working early in the evening and take some time to relax; maybe watching a film with the family. Discourage any last minute cramming which could make them forget what they have already revised.

The night before an exam make sure your child has everything they need for their exam, double check when and where the exam is, last minute panics in the morning will not help, and remind them they are not allowed to take any electronic equipment including mobile phones into the exam room. Set an alarm clock, or maybe two, ensuring you leave enough time to get to school well before the exam starts.

On the day of the exam ensure your child is out of bed if you need to leave the house before them.

They should have a good breakfast or lunch before an exam. The canteen in school is open from 8am so if they don't eat at home they could have a breakfast in school, maybe with friends, whilst giving their notes a last read over.

Don't forget to wish your child well as this is what they have worked so hard for and they will appreciate your support even if they do not show it.

After the exam ask how it went but don't insist on a detailed account. They may need some space or want to talk about their exam before they move on. Encourage your child not to dwell on the exam they have just done but to focus on the ones that are left to do.

### **What else can you do?**

Encourage your child without too much pressure. Regular "check-ins" may help and show interest in what they have to say even if you don't follow all of the technical detail. Offer praise and encouragement and if things don't go too well help them to move on.

You may want to arrange something special for the end of the exams to give your child something to look forward to.

### **Contact details**

Mrs A Elgood – Head of Year

Mr P Atkinson – Assistant Headteacher (Achievement)

Mrs C McCall - Examinations Officer

Mrs A Ellison – Faculty Leader English

Mr J Farthing – Faculty Leader Maths

Mr L Rochford – Faculty Leader Science

Mr S Ord – Faculty Leader Technology & Computing

Mrs J Armstrong – Faculty Leader H&S/PE/Art/music

Mrs S Biais – Faculty Leader Spanish/History/Geography

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### **Useful Revision Resources**

The following websites are helpful for your child's revision.

[www.gcsebitesize.org.uk](http://www.gcsebitesize.org.uk)

[www.getrevising.co.uk](http://www.getrevising.co.uk)

[www.aqa.co.uk](http://www.aqa.co.uk)

[www.ocr.co.uk](http://www.ocr.co.uk)

[www.pearson.co.uk](http://www.pearson.co.uk)

[www.collins.co.uk/revision](http://www.collins.co.uk/revision)