

10 May 2021



Dear Parent/Carer

I wanted to write to you to keep you informed about the plans for Term 6 with regards to assessment and feedback opportunities for your child.

Firstly, the week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> June will be when the Year 9 STS Bacculaureate examinations take place. This marks the culmination of their hard work over the past three years and the end of their Key Stage 3 part of school life. Following these assessments, your child will receive a certificate that provides them with the details about their achievements. These assessments are important and I hope that your child will take the opportunity to prepare for them. The best advice I can give them on how to approach these assessments is as follows:

- 1) Start early: The earlier they start to revise, the better prepared they will be and the more confident they will feel going in. Research shows that short periods of revision conducted over a prolonged time scale leads to better retention. My advice is to revise a topic for 30 minutes then take a 10-minute break before tackling another topic. The sooner they start, the more times they can cover the work and the more information will stick.
- 2) Plan revision: Having a revision timetable is a great way to get organised. Each subject has a slot on the timetable so it avoids the least favourite subject being forgotten. It also means they can plan their revision around their regular leisure activities and designate a specific time to do revision. This means it is more likely to happen.
- 3) Vary the subjects: While it may sound like a great idea to spend a whole evening revising one subject, in reality we are likely to lose focus over an extended period. So if the plan was to spend an hour revising a night, then this could be two subjects and 30 minutes on each.
- 4) Reading is quite ineffective: This will be the one time I say reading is not the way forward. Passive reading of their notes or revision guides leads to minimal uptake of information. If they create flash cards on the topic as they read the notes, it becomes more effective as they are having to think about the information and how to make a question out of it.
- 5) Flash cards: These are a great tool. They think about the information as they create them, then they can use them to test themselves. If you have a spare few minutes, they can even hand them over to you to quiz them – Great news is the answers will be on the back so you don't have to be an expert on all their subjects too!
- 6) Mind maps: A single page summary of the work that shows the links and can include diagrams as a visual stimulus too. Very helpful for showing how parts of a topic tie together.
- 7) Use the internet: BBC Bitesize, Seneca and YouTube all have great resources to help prepare for a range of subjects. These can be used alongside their own notes to help fill in any gaps.

As we recognise the importance of this year for them and it does mark the end of the first stage of their secondary school lives, we are going to hold a parent's evening on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> July. This will provide you with the opportunity to discuss your child's progress and identify any areas they should focus on so they are ready to start Year 10 and their GCSE courses upon our return in September. The details of this evening will be confirmed closer to the time.

I hope you find the information in this letter useful.

Yours faithfully

V Wright

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