

Year 11 Newsletter - December 2022

Dear Parent(s) and Carer(s),

Year 11 have now completed the first of their two full terms with us this year, providing us with an opportunity to reflect on progress since September 2022. Many students put a lot of time and effort into revising for the mock exams in November. During the mock results morning it was pleasing to see so many happy faces, as many students reflected on their current attainment and what 'next steps' are needed to achieve their future goals. Our focus in the new year will be about **'revising smarter, not harder'**, ensuring students are preparing in a productive and sustainable way for the final term and a half. The **GCSEs start on 15 May 2023 and the final exam is on 21 June 2023**. The Year 11 team will be providing all students with a personalised timetable for the GCSE exam period in the new year, to support with time management.

Please take the time to read the following key updates, to familiarise yourselves with what will be happening for year 11 over the next term.

'Small Chunks of Study' over the Christmas Break

Year 11 do need some time to rest over the Christmas break, spending valuable time with family and friends. It is also important that, with a three week break from being in school, students complete regular smaller tasks to recall key knowledge ready for learning and assessment in the new year. Research has shown that regular small chunks of reviewing learning will have the greatest impact on a person's retention, not 2-3 hours the night before an exam.

I have attached some suggestions from our subject leads, on how students can make the most of their time, at the end of this newsletter.

NFS 6th Form

Please continue to complete your online applications, the deadline for this is **Monday 16th January 2023**.

In the Spring term there will opportunities for taster sessions and to 'Grill a 6th Former', where you will be able to ask current students about life in NFS 6th Form and the courses.

Silent Study

Starting from Tuesday 10th January, we will be offering Year 11 a silent study space after school. This will initially run on a Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 3:30-5:30pm. If students wish to attend, they should come to the library with homework or revision materials. Students will be expected to work in silence throughout, and there will be some access to computers. Please encourage your child to use this facility.

We will be speaking to some of our year 11 families to strongly recommend attendance to these sessions, to support certain students in reaching their potential.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Our first year 11 Parent Teacher Meetings happened on Wednesday 7th December, and it was pleasing to see so many of you there. These events provide you with an invaluable opportunity to talk directly with teachers about how to support your child's achievement within a subject.

A further evening of **Parent Teacher Meetings will happen on Tuesday 28th March**. The booking system will once again be through MCAS. If you do not have a log in please contact cpartlett@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk for support.

School Funded Revision Guides for Your Child

All year 11 students will be given a set of school funded revision guides and booklets for English, maths and science. These have been carefully selected to support students with their revision. They are to keep at home and use as they wish, but we do recommend building them into their revision planning. Teachers will also direct students to these guides, so please keep them safe.

Whilst we would like to be able to fund further subject resources I am sure you can appreciate this is just not feasible. If you would like to know which guides to purchase for these subjects please contact your child's teacher in the first instance.

Parent Information Evening

On **Wednesday 18th January we will be holding a year 11 parent information evening.** This is a fantastic opportunity to listen to Heads of Department explain how you can support your child in a subject, as well as more general information on supporting your child with study skills, dealing with exam stress and important exam protocol.

In the meantime, I have also attached information on supporting your child through year 11 from a company called Elevate. They provide 60-minute webinars for parents and begin at 6pm on the dates shown on the flier below.

Mock Exams

During the **two school weeks commencing 20th February**, year 11 will be sitting their second round of mock exams. Experience has taught us that students taking and becoming comfortable within this exam environment helps them best prepare for the final GCSE exams in May and June.

- The timetable will be sent home shortly after the Christmas break
- Exams will be sat in the school hall, under full exam conditions
- All access arrangements will be in place for relevant students (please contact our school SENDCO if you have any questions regarding this provision)

A key improvement goal for students is organisation and preparation of exam equipment. All students must have:

- a clear pencil case
- 2 black biros
- a pencil, rubber and sharpener
- calculator, protractor and compasses (maths, science, geography, etc.)

Careers Advice

Careers Meetings: Most year 11s have now had a one to one careers meeting with a trained advisor. Any students that have missed this meeting will be given another opportunity after the Christmas break.

Post-16 applications: Year 11 are advised to apply for college courses this side of Christmas as courses do fill up. Most sixth forms have now held open days, but some colleges have additional open days in January and February. Please check their websites.

Apprenticeships: Most school-leaver apprenticeships are advertised in March/ April. They are advertised on company websites or on the government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

Students wishing to do an apprenticeship are advised to also apply for a college course. This is a back-up plan in case they are unable to find an appropriate apprenticeship later on in the year.

Useful links: A reminder that the careers section of our website offers many useful links for research and information.

<https://www.nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk/page.php?d=careers&p=intro>

The school also subscribes to Unifrog - students can research careers here. Their username is the school email address. <https://www.unifrog.org/>

Choosing A Levels – a useful website on choosing the right A'Level courses can be found here <https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk/>

If you need any further careers advice please contact Mrs Barrett at Pbarrett@nottinghamfreeschool.co.uk

Thank you for taking the time to read these updates. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's tutor, Head of Year (Miss Harmer-Weston) or myself if you need any further support.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Farnie', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mrs Rebecca Farnie
Assistant Headteacher - Achievement

'Small Chunks of Revision' Supporting Revision Over the Christmas Break and Beyond

These are suggested activities from our subject leads, you are not expected to do everything from this list before you return. However, please ensure you spend regular, small chunks of time, on each of your subjects over the Christmas break.

Subject	Top tips for short tasks over the Christmas break and beyond
English Language	To revise effectively, you must plan and practise responses to questions. The questions are always very similar, but the extract will change. Use your language booklet from class to revise for the reading aspect of your exam. For creative writing, use https://www.window-swap.com/Window , plan responses in 5 minutes and write a creative piece based on the image.
English Literature	Firstly, ensure you are confident with the plot, characters, themes and context for each text. Next, revise core quotations and character descriptions. Revise actively by creating mind-maps, flash cards, voice notes and regularly revisit these to ensure you are in your long-term memory. Try the cover, write and check method. Plan responses to answers and attempt an extended answer in timed conditions. Useful channels/websites are: GCSE Pod, https://www.sparknotes.com/ and Mr Bruff's YouTube videos
Maths	The maths doesn't change, only the way they ask the question. Repeated practice is vital in maths, use your past paper pack and Dr Frost to practise the topics you have previously scored low on (use QLA sheet from your Parent Meeting if unsure here). Little and often practice can be structured using Corbett 5 a day and can be found at the following website https://corbettmaths.com/5-a-day/gcse/ A good You Tube channel for talking you through past exam questions, or for more general revision is: https://www.youtube.com/@MrTompkins Some recommended playlists are: Foundation Walk Throughs https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxp90x5c0ttbhKE1UhkAX3NQNgMVmdlYs Higher Walk Throughs https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxp90x5c0ttb-W-mdpSioN3hUzephjqk Revision https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxp90x5c0ttYb8-s1xOoe0gyP6GTrBYhp
Science	Revise little and often, begin with the content you do not know rather than the parts you are comfortable with. Follow the revision strategies explained to you by your teacher in the last week of term, do active revision techniques not passive, such as creating flash cards and then using them or the linking technique. Complete the relevant pages in your workbook using the Knowledge Organisers to help you. The page numbers to be completed vary depending on if you have a higher or foundation workbook. Higher: Bio 55-59 Chem 156-160 Phys 235-239 and Foundation: Bio 48-52 Chem 134-138 Phys 205-209 The YouTube pages below are useful if you need an explanation of something, but remember just watching lots of videos passively is not a good use of your time. Biology GCSE Biology (9-1) - YouTube Chemistry GCSE Chemistry (9-1) - YouTube Physics GCSE Physics (9-1) - YouTube

Spanish	Memorise your flash cards little and often; look, cover, say or write and check. Use a mini whiteboard to write them out from memory - write the start letter of each word to help you. Highlight a key word in the question to prompt you. Highlight the key verbs or structures you keep forgetting. Use the larger flashcards to break an answer down into smaller chunks with the English on one side and the Spanish on the other to test yourself. Ask someone else to test you. Record yourself reading them out, play it back and then repeat.
History	Complete the worksheets given to you this week, on pre-NHS public health, including the three interpretation questions. If you would like to do additional revision, then we would recommend using Seneca.
Geography	Keep up to date with the news and events that could link to Geography - especially extreme weather events and energy security. Use your QLA feedback sheet from your mock to revise and improve areas of weakness based on your question score. Some ideas for revision activities include making flashcards, practice drawing labelled diagrams, make a mind map of a topic, make quiz questions on a topic and then test yourself.
RE	Keep working through your KO's and the associated questions. Revise TEACHINGS TEACHINGS TEACHINGS! See the front of your book for a list. Also, don't forget Seneca: Class code: x8isbnavae
Art	The deadline for your final pieces is the first day back, please ensure these are completed over the break ready to hand in.
Music	Continue to listen to all your set works over Christmas. Try and listen to 3 new pieces of music and see if you can make connections to the 8 set works. Also, use www.teoria.com or www.tonesavvy.com to practice your musical dictation exercises.
PE	Practice doesn't make perfect. Practice makes permanent. Please repeatedly revisit all of the weaker areas from your most recent exam, to help you retain and then recall the information in your next assessment.
Engineering	Students have been given a pack to aid their revision. They should complete the RAG chart in here first and then use this to guide them on the topics they need to revise. Students should complete the 3 mocks given to them in the pack and use the mark schemes online to self-assess their work. We will go through these mocks in class after the holidays. There is also a revision guide included, you could use this to create flash cards on key terms.
Food	Practice making a range of dishes from North and South America. This could be starters, mains, desserts or sides. If you could try to make a 3-course meal in 3 hours, this will be valuable practice for the practical exam. The more you practice cooking, the better prepared you will be for the exam.



Parent Support Webinars 2022-23

elevate[↑]
education

Autumn Term

20th September

*How to Get (& Keep!) Your Child
Motivated!*

11th October

*How to Help Your Child Manage Their
Time*

8th November

Helping Your Child With Their Mock Exams

29th November

*How to Help Your Child Become More
Resilient*

Spring Term

17th January

How to Help Your Child Take Better Notes

7th February

*How to Help Your Child Write Better
Essays*

28th February

Helping Your Child Prepare for Exams

21st March

*Exam Room Skills - Minimising Stress and
Maximising Marks*

Summer Term

25th April

How to Help Improve Your Child's Memory

16th May

*Helping Your Child with Their Stress and
Wellbeing*

13th June

Getting Ready for Next Year!

get.elevateeducation.uk/schoolwebinar

*All webinars are 60-minutes
long and begin at 6pm*

