



LB04AT

March 2024

Dear Parents & Carers of Year 11,

Year 11 Exam Season

I wanted to set out some key dates for our Year 11 students in the run up to the summer exam season to help them to plan their time and for parents/carers to be aware of what the provision will be in school, and the reasons for this. Many students will have already partially completed some of their exam components before this time, particularly those with practical or 'coursework' elements and we want to make sure that we are making decisions to meet the needs of all our students as best we can.

The summer exam season for Year 11 starts earlier than usual this year, on Thursday 9 May, with a significant proportion of the exams scheduled before May half term. Previously, we have kept students in lessons until half term, they have taken their exams around their lessons, going on Study Leave after May half term. This year, the schedule is such that this would bring severe disruption to lessons, with students balancing exams, preparation sessions and timetabled lessons. We think that this would add unnecessary pressure and does not seem in the best interests of our students in terms of their revision/preparation or their wellbeing. As such, we have taken the decision to finish formal teaching of lessons on Wednesday 8 May, with students on flexible Study Leave from Thursday 9 May.

We know that our students are individuals and work best in different ways. Flexible Study Leave means that students (with guidance from home) can make decisions about how they will use their time most effectively. For some students this will mean keeping to their routine, coming to school as usual. Others will prefer to study at home and just come to school for exams. We expect that most will want to do a combination – and that is fine! Staff will be available throughout the exam period to encourage, reassure, support and care for our Year 11s. We know that exam periods are stressful, we will do everything we can to look after them during this time.

From Thursday 9 May – Friday 24 May there is a schedule of supervised, Independent Study and exam preparation sessions which fills the full school day, running alongside the exams. Students can attend as many, or as few, of these sessions as they choose. They will need to be in school for either the full day (8.50am-3.35pm), the full morning (8.50am-12.45pm) or the full afternoon (1.50pm-3.35pm) to help us to make sure we know who is on site at all times. Independent Study sessions will be based in the Dining Room, students should bring their revision materials with them and are welcome to bring devices, snacks, work with ear phones in etc. The sessions will be supervised by staff to ensure they are quiet, focused and purposeful, but will not be taught sessions. Exam preparation sessions will run for the session prior to each exam until half term. Subject staff will be available to support students in the Dining Room, answer any last-minute questions and offer reassurance, these will not be formal taught sessions. After May half term, Independent Study sessions will continue in the Dining Room for as long as students need them.

On Friday 14 June, after the GCSE Physics exam, we will be holding a celebration afternoon/evening for Year 11. We are going to work with students to make this an event that they will really enjoy and remember. Students will be able to spend some time with their teachers later in the afternoon, sign each other's shirts and have a celebration assembly together as a year group, looking back over their time so far at WKGS. We have then planned a festival-style event for later in the afternoon/evening with live music, inflatables, games, food stalls etc.

A full schedule for students from Thursday 9 May, as well as more details about the celebration events will be released in the coming weeks.

Best wishes,

Mrs L Begbie
Deputy Headteacher