

4<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Dear Year 11 Parents/Carers

I hope that you are well and that you enjoyed a restful half term.

As you are aware this year is a vitally important one for your son/daughter as they prepare for their GCSE examinations in the summer term. Year 11 have made a good start to the year, with the vast majority of students stepping up to meet the increased expectations and work load.

### **Intervention**

I have been particularly impressed with the students' commitment to after school intervention with, on average, 75% of students attending sessions. I know at times it can seem that after school sessions create a pressured environment for students, however, I know you understand that students are competing with others across the country to get the grades that they need to be able to access the next stage of their education, be this sixth form, college or an apprenticeship.

As you are aware students must secure a good level in their Maths and English courses or, by law, they will need to retake these in the sixth form or at college. The extra hours provided through morning sessions, after school, weekend and holiday revision days will help ensure our students have the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful. This strategy has been highly effective over the last few years. Consistent attendance at intervention sessions is vital as occasional attendance will dramatically reduce the impact of the session. From next week we will be tracking attendance at intervention very closely and will keep you informed if you son or daughter is not regularly attending the sessions to which they are invited.

Thank you for supporting us in ensuring intervention is effective by insisting that your child attends sessions and by avoiding making appointments etc. before 4.00pm.

Later this half term we will issue to you an overview of all the weekend and holiday sessions that we will be putting on for students so that they can plan their time.

### **Mock Examinations**

Year 11 students have their first round of mock examinations from week commencing Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November until the end of week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> December. Students have been given their exam timetables and guidance has been shared with them about how to prepare for these examinations. It is very important that students do not simply see these examinations "a dry run" for the mocks, to identify what they do not yet know and cannot yet do. Instead they must prepare thoroughly so that their teachers, and we as a school, can get a clear idea of exactly where they are currently at in terms of attainment and progress. We can then adjust teaching, intervention and support to make sure that 100% of our students achieve their goals and personal best.

In addition to intervention, students should now be spending a significant amount of time at home in the evenings and at the weekends preparing for their mocks. Revision should include: reviewing content, producing revision cards, completing practice questions and using GCSE Pod, our on line revision tool. Students should be spending at least 1½ hours each evening revising and at least 4 hours each day on a weekend. It is best for them to revise for ½ hour to 45 minutes at a time before having a 5 minute break and then returning to their studies. They should prepare a revision timetable and been given a plan and guidance about how to do this.

Thank you for encouraging them to do the best in their mock examinations.



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In Partnership with:



On the 20<sup>th</sup> January students will have a Mock Exam Results Day where they will get their GCSE results in an envelope and experience what the real results day will be like in the summer term. Following this on 26<sup>th</sup> January you will then attend a Parents' Evening where we will discuss your child's current progress and attainment.

### **Post 16 Options Evening**

On 17<sup>th</sup> November we have our P16 Options Evening during which students can find out about sixth form options at Marriotts and within the Stevenage Sixth Consortium as well as about apprenticeships and college options. Please see the separate letter enclosed. I look forward to seeing all parents and carers at this very important event.

### **Student Interviews**

Following our Inset Day on 1<sup>st</sup> November, we now have our first set of progress data for Year 11. Mock examinations will give us more information but it is very useful to know how teachers are currently assessing Year 11s based on their progress over the last year and half term.

You will receive your child's report week commencing 14<sup>th</sup> November. On Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November every child in Year 11 will have brief interview with a member of the senior team or their Year Leader to review their progress and to set targets and priorities. You will receive brief notes of these interviews.

### **Theme Day**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> November we have our first 'Theme Day' of the year which focusses on careers and which will help your child prepare for the next stage of their education. Please see the separate letter enclosed.

### **Important Dates for the rest of this half term:**

**Year 11 Reports:** Week commencing 14<sup>th</sup> November

**Student Interviews:** 14<sup>th</sup> November

**Post 16 Options Evening:** 17<sup>th</sup> November

**Theme Day:** 23<sup>rd</sup> November

**Mock Examinations:** Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November to Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December

**Mock Results Day:** 20<sup>th</sup> January

**Year 11 Parents' Evening:** 26<sup>th</sup> January

**Prom Date:** 7<sup>th</sup> July, Knebworth House

**Sixth Form Induction Day:** 10<sup>th</sup> July (provisional)

**Final Exam date for Year 11:** 28<sup>th</sup> June. Please do not arrange any family holidays before this date as your child will miss an exam which would lead them to fail in that subject.

**GCSE Exam Results Day:** 24<sup>th</sup> August

### **Additional letters attached:**

Post 16 Options Evening  
Theme Day

Yours sincerely

Ms B Honnor  
**Headteacher**