

GCSE EXAMS 2019



THE EXAM SEASON

- The GCSE exams starts on Monday 13th May and runs through to 19th June
- Teign does not operate 'Study Leave'. Students will stay in school full time until 24th May (start of half term). After half term, they do not need to be in school for lessons in which they have completed all of their exams. If there are lessons in which they are yet to complete the exams, they are expected to attend school at those times.
- For those who are not able to go home during the day, the school will provide supervised support.
- The Exam results are out on Thursday 22nd August 2019



WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL DOING?

- Lessons are focused on ensuring your children are ready for their exams
- Mock Exams will take place the week beginning 28th January and will most likely run for 8 days.
- This will be following an adjusted timetable but within the normal school day (there is no study leave)
- If your child receives concessions, these will be applied during the Mock Exam series
- Lunchtime and afterschool sessions are running now – please take a copy.
- Providing support to students who require additional care in relation to anxiety and stress
- Preparing the students in how to revise etc



WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN?

- Be aware of which exams they have and when. Exam timetables will be issued closer to the beginning of the exam series.
 - Put a copy on the fridge and help them to manage the magnitude (there are a lot of exams that can seem overwhelming)
- Be the feeding station – encourage them to eat healthily and drink plenty of water – avoid sugary drinks/too much caffeine .
- Do not allow them to take supplements that affect their sleep e.g. ProPlus
- Monitor their sleep – are they getting enough (or too much!)?
- Remove noise and distraction when they are studying. Do they have a quiet place to study – if not, please speak to the school



WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN?

- Remove electronic devices whilst revising (try to encourage them to do this themselves to avoid conflict). They cannot focus with their social media interrupting them.
- Support, encourage, cajole
- Help them to adjust their priorities –
 - Are they socialising too much (not enough)?
 - If they have a job, how much of an impact is this having?
 - As we get closer to the exams, where can stress/conflict be removed from their lives? Chores and home expectations – can they be excused or have the pressure reduced?



MORE SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

- Get them to test themselves/each other a lot.
 - The new exams are content heavy. They need to know a lot of stuff! The more they are required to recall information, the more likely information will be moved into their long term memory
- Practice with past papers and exam questions – there are not that many, but those that do exist are on the exam board websites (Edexcel, AQA, OCR)
- Quiz them at the dinner table, in the car etc about their learning
- Start revision now – the best learning is done in the first 20 mins. Therefore do short 20 min blocks of revision and then change the subject (e.g. 20 mins English, 5 min break, 20 mins Maths, 5 min break, 20 mins Science)
- Learning key words – all subjects have PLCs that outline the key concepts and words that students need to know



MORE SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

- Use memory tricks – mnemonics, mind maps . Making learning rude or funny is likely to lead to better recall.
- Study without music – research shows that recall is best when carried out under the same conditions in which it was learnt
- Time management – there is a lot of help for this on the internet. Please take an example revision plan
- Get the students to set goals and targets in their studies/revision (not target grades, but things to achieve e.g. I need to do 1 hour of science revision this week)
- Ensure that they are clear about what exactly they need to revise. Each student is different – if you/they are unsure, contact the teacher directly



HOW MUCH TIME SHOULD THE STUDENTS BE SPENDING REVISING?

- Every student is different
- At the moment, they will still be getting homework and so revision needs to reflect:
 - Recapping the learning from each day (get them to tell you what they have learnt that day, go through their books with them daily)
 - Students should aim to do about 7+ hours of revision a week on top of homework. Clearly, if they have more homework in one week, the balance needs to be addressed
 - Students must timetable social/rest time into their schedules, but the balance must be right.
- As we get closer to the exams, the weight of homework will reduce and students need to take responsibility for increasing the amount of time revising
- Students work a 25 hour week at school – you would expect to work between 35 and 40 hours a week – this is not a bad guideline



SUPPORTING THE CHILDREN

- What do you do if you are concerned about your child?
 - The exams are extremely demanding and there are a lot of them.
 - Students will cope in different ways, but if you are concerned about the well being, please contact the form tutor straight away
 - We will work with students as to how they reduce their anxiety
- Encourage them not to avoid the issue – it will not go away and will only become more unmanageable. They must talk to someone – school, you, Kooth, friends
- If an exam does not go well, students can often 'give up'. It is really important that this doesn't happen. Please let us know.



WHAT YOU CAN TAKE AWAY!

- An example revision timetable
- The school lunch and afterschool revision/drop in offer

Key Resources:

- Mathswatch = vle.mathswatch.co.uk (Login = first initial and surname@teignschool e.g. agoodwin@teignschool Password = square)
- www.bbc.com/bitesize

