

Dear Parent/Carer,

05 May 2022

Year 11 and 13 Exam Preparation and GCSE Exams

In these final few days before the Year 11 and Year 13 exam season begins in full we would like to thank you for your ongoing support in ensuring your child is making the most of their learning and revision opportunities. We look forward to continuing this ongoing partnership over the coming months working towards the best results possible for your child.

In order to ensure that your child has meaningful learning and revision opportunities in their final months at school we have created a **personalised booster session timetable** which will enable your child to have an intensive revision opportunity before their GCSE/BTEC or A-Level Exam.

These sessions will take place in one of the following slots:

- **A booster session in the afternoon from 12:30 to 15:30** the day before a morning exam. This will include a 30-minute lunch break from 13:20 to 13:50.
- **A booster session in the morning from 09:40 to 12:30** before an afternoon exam. This will include a 20 min break from 11:20 to 11:40.
- **A mid-day booster session** where an exam falls in the afternoon after a large/whole cohort exam in the morning. These range from 1hr 30 mins to 2 hours.

Furthermore, in order to maximise time with their teachers, **Year 11 and Year 13 will continue to have lessons in their subject up until the day of their final exam in that subject.** This will ensure that they have access to expert teaching and are able to ensure that there is focused revision time.

As Year 11 and Year 13 students start to finish their subjects, their timetable will be adapted and they may have a late start or an early finish where teaching is complete. Study spaces will be made available for those that would prefer to continue to revise in school.

Each week you and your child will be emailed a copy of their timetable as well as students being given a hard copy that will inform them of the upcoming week in terms of:

- Their scheduled exams
- Their booster revision sessions
- Their timetabled lessons
- Any early starts where they have an AM exam and must be in school for 8:45am
- Any early lunches where they have a PM
- Any adaptations to their day as subjects begin to finish

Principal Hannah Fahey

Please ensure that you talk through this timetable with their child each week so that they know where they are expected to be and do not miss these continuing learning and revision opportunities.

Year 11 and Year 13 Final Day

- Year 11 Exams will finish on Thursday 23rd June, unless they are completing a home language exam in Gujarati, Polish, Portuguese, Persian, Russian or Panjabi.
- Year 13 Exams will finish on Friday 24th June, though a number of students will complete their exams before this date.

Exam Contingency Day 2022

The awarding bodies have designated Wednesday 29 June 2022 as a 'contingency day' for examinations. The designation of a 'contingency day' in examination timetable is in the event of national or significant local disruption to examinations in the United Kingdom. **All students must remain available until Wednesday 29 June 2022 should an awarding body need to invoke its contingency plan.**

Revision Strategies/Suggestions:

We recognise that students can struggle as the exam season intensifies to maintain their motivation for revision, or struggle to ensure that they are using their time effectively. We highly recommend that your child plans their revision timetable using the example attached.

Parents have also suggested the following as effective strategies to support their child:

- Take away games consoles/tablets/mobile phones and give the devices back to your child at agreed times after evidence of revision has been shared with you.
- Agree rewards with your child for completing revision. These do not have to be expensive but could be as simple as making them their favourite dinner, or reducing their chores.
- Ask your child to show you their revision notes and self-testing activities each day. We are encouraging all students to actively revise by making quizzes, flashcards or practice papers not simply re-reading their notes.
- Encourage your child to make use of the online revision resources on TEAMS, Hegarty Maths, Educake and Impress the Examiner.
- You can also access some great study skills guides on the following website:
<https://www.skillsyouneed.com/learn/study-skills.html>

Managing Exam Stress and Student Wellbeing:

Everyone gets nervous; it's a normal part of exams. While it's not so easy to stop feeling nervous, you can use relaxation techniques to keep your nerves under control and focus on what you want to achieve.

Here are some tips and techniques you can try if you feel stressed before and during exams.

Before your exams

- Being prepared and doing the work will always help you feel more confident about sitting your exams, so do as much revision as you can.
- Celebrate your successes in revision tasks and know when you do well.
- Meditation and exercise are great ways to help clear your mind, leaving you feeling refreshed and energised. Plan something for first thing in the morning – if you start your day well, you are more likely to stay calm.
- Use deep breathing to relax your body and mind.
- Eat the right foods and drink lots of water – for example, too much coffee and sugar can make you feel more anxious as they are stimulants.

- Use positive language with yourself and visualise your exams going smoothly.
- If possible, avoid classmates who are highly stressed or who want to talk about the exams.
- Practise your relaxation techniques so they are natural to you by exam day.
- Plan your exam day so you feel in control; allow for travel and proper meals.

During your exams

- Breathe – take some deep breaths to relax your body and mind. This will really help if you freeze up or are struggling to get started.
- Focus on your paper. Block out the exam room and other students.
- Read the entire question paper, answering the questions you feel most comfortable with. By answering these first, you will feel more confident and settle into the rest of the exam.
- Stuck with a question? Leave it. Work on the next one and then come back to it.
- Remember, it's not a race. You've been allocated a set amount of time – use it and make sure you have done as much as you can.
- Keep a good attitude and use positive language with yourself; your nerves will pass and you're not alone.

If your child is finding the level of stress unmanageable, please talk to the school so we can add further support. You can do this by emailing LHaughton@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk.

Parents who have children in Year 11 and require further guidance or support should contact their child's coach, or Senior Vice Principal – Ms Khan: jkhan@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk.

Parents who have children in Year 13 and require further guidance or support should contact their child's coach, or Assistant Principal in Charge of Sixth Form – Ms Bhadare: sbhadare@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk.

Thank you so much in advance for your ongoing support during this time.

With love, hope and trust,

Jennie Khan
Senior Vice Principal - Quality of Education

Simran Bhadare
Assistant Principal in Charge of Sixth Form