



JMH/SLE

22 December 2023

Dear Parents/ Carers

I want to congratulate all of our Year 11 students on their attitude during the recent pre-public examinations (PPEs). We were exceptionally proud of the way in which they conducted themselves in the run up to and during the exam period. By now, you should have received your child's PPE results and they should know what they need to work on to continue to make further progress by the time their final exams come around in the summer.

As we near the end of the first term of Year 11, it is important to reflect on what has worked well but also what we can do differently to ensure that our students are able to achieve their full potential in the summer exams. For this reason, I am writing to you make you aware of some important changes that will be taking effect from January.

Changes to Teaching Groups

The recent PPEs have provided us with valuable and accurate up-to date information on the progress that your child has made so far in Year 11. To allow us to make sure that your child continues to be supported and challenged, we will be using this PPE data to make some changes to teaching groups. Any changes that we make will be in the best interests of each child to ensure that they are given the appropriate level of support, challenge and pace in lessons. Please make sure that your child is aware that they may well be in a different group with a different teacher for some of their core subjects when they return after Christmas. Please prepare them for this possibility and remind them that any change we make is done with the students' best interests at the centre of our decision making.

Changes to Tutor Groups

To increase the amount of curriculum time given to English and Mathematics, we have made the decision to rearrange tutor groups so that students are grouped with students of a similar ability and target grade and put into either an English Stretch and Challenge Group or a Maths Stretch and Challenge Group. This means that students will an additional 25 minutes of either English or Maths each day; these sessions will be delivered by specialist English or Maths teachers including the Directors of Faculty and senior leaders within the school. These sessions are incredibly important and will target specific areas of weakness identified from the recent PPEs. This will be Period Zero, and it is incredibly important that your child is on their zone on time in the mornings (by 8.30) so that Period Zero can begin promptly at 8.40.

Period Zero – The Rationale

- There is a direct correlation between the amount of time a pupil spends in front of high-quality teachers, and the pupil's exam outcomes.



- Period Zero ensures that every single child has access to additional opportunities to develop knowledge retention and application in the core subjects.
- Through creating additional capacity we can enable all students to have additional time with specialist teachers to support them in making exceptional progress.

It is, therefore, more important than ever that students are in school on time and prepared to learn. Students will still have a Year 11 assembly every Monday and we will ensure that, in addition to the teacher delivering the English or Maths curriculum, they also have a pastoral tutor who can support them and be in regular communication with parents and carers.

Changes to the School Day

Now that we have completed our analysis of the recent PPE data, we are in a position to identify students who require further support in subject areas. From January, we will be putting on compulsory Period Six intervention sessions for students who need further support with their learning, allowing us to work with students in smaller group settings to support them with any gaps in their learning. We will be sending out letters to parents and students in the new year with details of the Period Six sessions that they are expected to attend. We appreciate your support with ensuring your child attends these important, compulsory sessions.

Champions' Hour

We all know that, for students to be successful and achieve their potential, the next six months will require lots of hard work and dedication. We know that some students prefer to study and revise in school, and we are also aware that not all students have a dedicated study space at home. Every Monday to Thursday, we will have a dedicated Champions' Hour in the library, from 4.10-5.10 where students can complete supervised revision. There will be a member of the leadership team on hand every day to offer support, alongside snacks for the students and revision resources such as flashcards, coloured pens, textbooks, chromebooks and knowledge organisers. All students are welcome and will be rewarded for attendance and hard work. Please encourage your child to attend so that we can support them with their revision and knowledge retention. This provision will be in place from Monday 15th January 2024.

We realise that this sounds like a lot of changes but please rest assured that we are doing this in the very best interests of your children. Please also be assured that the Year 11 pastoral team will remain the same, with Mrs Cockbill and Mrs Godridge as Head of Year and Student Support Officer.

We will communicate all of these changes to your children when they return after Christmas. Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas break.

Yours faithfully

Mrs J Mahon
Vice Principal – Curriculum and Standards