

Headteacher: Mr D. Whales | Chair of Governors: Mr T. French

18th December 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to you first and foremost to invite all Year 11 parents to a 'launch of the exam season meeting'. I have asked that the invite be shared with all parents, as I want everyone to be clear about our determination to deliver the highest academic success for your children.

The Year 11 parent focus meeting will be held on **Tuesday 9 January, 6 pm to 7 pm, in the assembly hall**. During the meeting we will share the academic expectations, and support, that we will provide over the coming 6 months. The meeting will be a presentation-style event with key members of staff who will be driving your child's progress and ultimately their achievement in their GCSE exams.

Over the past two terms, we have had a very open and overt focus on standards and expectations. The result is that in the classrooms teachers have been able to focus entirely on teaching and learning. The leadership team in the background has been focused on assessment, attainment, and the Quality of Education. These aspects take a little longer to see and to feel. What I have described below gives some clarity around the increasing academic aspirations we have for your children.

During the launch evening we will share more details, but to give you an indication of what we will sharing on the evening:

1. A comprehensive timeline from the start of the Spring term to the last summer exam.
2. **The daily learning support plan which will run from 8 am to 5 pm.**
 - a. 8 am - *'early risers' breakfast study session*.
 - b. *'Lesson 0'* – their 15-minute Science booster that already happens every day.
 - c. The *'working lunch'* – study facilities for quiet study.
 - d. *'Lesson 6'* – a compulsory additional taught session – 3.20 pm to 4 pm.
 - e. *'Golden Hour Study'* – 4 pm to 5 pm for quiet revision.
3. During the February half term there will be additional booster sessions.
4. At Easter there will be diagnostic and targeted learning sessions (Exam practice and improvement).

The expectation is that students will access as many of these as possible and that ALL Year 11 students will attend lesson 6.

We are aware that this represents a sharp change in expectation – which I am very comfortable with. I want to enable the students at KSA to be the hardest working Year 11s in the city. For the next 6 months, I want the Year 11s to feel nothing but support and guidance towards reaching their examination goals and a real sense that we are all in this together.

There are two additional and important parts to this expectation:

- When your child attends these additional sessions, they will be awarded 'credits', these credits will enable greatly reduced Prom tickets and with enough commitment completely free tickets.

- If, in the unlikely event your child refuses this additional support, or their general conduct is not where we expect. This will result in their invite to the success/reward events at the end of the year being removed – primarily the Prom and Graduation.

The rationale behind this is that these events signal and celebrate all the hard work of their time at KSA. There will of course be occasions and reasons why attendance might be problematic. We understand that and will do everything we can to support and remove any barriers to attendance.

I want us all to accept that the summer exams are high-stakes terminal assessments, they are designed to 'test' your child's knowledge and understanding from their 5 years of study. They will create raised stress levels. I believe the best way to manage this is to make sure we prepare our students with everything they need to be able to rise to the challenge.

The additional support outlined here is designed to provide the right conditions to support your child. We don't expect everyone to achieve grade 9s, we do expect everyone to 'work as hard as they possibly can'.

Last week, I spoke with a group of Year 11 students to gauge their feelings toward the plan; their response was appreciation that we are trying to go above and beyond for them. Friday morning, I shared the plan during the Year 11 Roll Call with the rest of the year group. We intend that the 'exam season' will go live following the meeting on the 9th Jan.

It would be extremely helpful if you could confirm your attendance at this event via this [form](#). Within the form, you can offer any feedback or questions that you might have so that we can address these during the January meeting.

Lastly, as a reminder, the Year 11 Finals begin when we return from Christmas. It would be appropriate for your children to complete some study over the Christmas break. There is a very important balance though to be struck between important rest, family time, and preparing for the exams in the new year.

I look forward to seeing you all in January.



Mr. D Whales
Headteacher