

October 2019

Dear Parents

We would be grateful if you could read the important information about the opportunities and the challenges that lie ahead for your son in Year 11.

He is of course continuing with the same subjects and, as far as possible, the same teachers that he had last year and we all hope that he has settled down quickly to the hard work in this final GCSE year. We would expect him to be spending **about two hours a night on schoolwork at home**. A number of subjects have major pieces of coursework (deadlines for which are issued by the department) and we hope that you will encourage him to embark on this early and plan his schedule carefully to ensure that he meets the deadlines without any last-minute panic.

Please note that at this stage the majority of boys in Year 11 are working towards the 10 GCSEs at the Higher Level, which would gain them a 9-5 grade. However, your son will do mock examinations in January and we will look at his results early in 2020 very closely and may subsequently change his examination entry. If it becomes necessary to change your son's examination entry next January/February, we will contact you. We would be grateful if you could support us by stressing to your son how seriously we take the mock examinations (6 – 17 January 2020) preceded by Art and Spanish/German Language Speaking and Listening exams in December). We have given your son a great deal of revision guidance leading up to the Year 10 examinations and he will get further advice throughout Year 11. We also attach a Year 11 Mock Revision Planner and some revision guidance for the mocks and the final GCSE examinations. For boys who considerably underperform in the mock examinations we will expect them to sit a GCSE remock exam on **Saturday, 7 March 2020**.

We would wish to advise parents that as a rule we encourage boys to start revision for the GCSE examinations at least ten weeks before the start of the exams (approximately the first week of March). If a boy has not performed well in the mock exams and needs to do a remock we would encourage him to start his revision even earlier. You may wish to reflect on this information when booking family holidays for the February half term or Easter holiday.

Although the main focus of Year 11 is the GCSE examinations we also will start to consider Year 12 study at the RGS and there are several key dates and activities which will occur during the Autumn Term. Your son will receive a booklet about the Year 12 courses in the Sixth Form at the Royal Grammar School later this term and will then consider these and other options. **We have minimum entry criteria for the Sixth Form at RGS of 8 taught full GCSEs at Grades 9-4 including English and Mathematics at Grade 5 or above and a total point score from the 8 GCSEs of a minimum of 48 points. Most boys will in fact need a minimum of 52 points to be sure of qualifying for the subjects they wish to do as they must also achieve the subject criteria for the subjects they wish to study at A Level.** This will be clearly explained in the Sixth Form entry booklet. There is a Year 11 Parents' Afternoon on Monday, 10 February 2019 at 4.15 p.m.

This will give parents the opportunity to discuss with subject staff their son's progress and potential A Level suitability in various subjects. On Wednesday, 20 November 2019, there will be the Year 11 Sixth Form Options Evening when we encourage all Year 11 parents to come to school with their sons to hear about the various subjects we offer in Year 12.

In addition, everybody will have an individual discussion with me, their form tutor or a member of the Senior Team after the mock examinations. We believe that as we know your son and know about A level subjects and university entrance he will receive the best possible guidance.

Before the boys go on study leave in May 2020, Ms Sowah will speak to the boys and issue a letter about work experience and our expectations. We would expect boys to arrange some period of work experience between the end of Year 11 and the start of Year 12. If you are an employer and feel that you might be able to offer the opportunity of work-experience, please contact Ms Sowah. All offers gratefully received.

Just a few dates for your diary:

20 November 2019	Year 11 Sixth Form Options Evening (this will be immediately followed by initial Year 12 subject requests).
Jan/Feb 2020	Follow-up conversation and confirmation of Year 12 subject requests.
10 February 2020	Year 11 Parents' Afternoon.
Saturday, 7 March 2020	GCSE Remock examinations.
May/June 2020	GCSE examinations.
22 June 2020	Sixth Form Taster Day. This day is compulsory for all boys wishing to enter the Sixth Form.

We do believe that it is important that neither you nor your son should regard Year 11 as solely working for GCSE exams. We would encourage your son to pursue his interests, sports or hobbies whether inside or outside school, as relaxation and development of the whole person are important.

Finally, if you do have any concerns at all about your son, please do not hesitate to contact his Form Tutor or me. We all hope that with close contact between parents and school your son will have a successful and enjoyable year.

Yours faithfully
D P Durning
Head of Year 11