

# Year 10 Parents' Information Evening

5 October 2022

## Questions & Answers



*The following questions were asked through the chat during the online meeting. Most questions were responded to during the meeting, but the answers below may be more detailed than the response originally given.*

***Are we going to get access to the PowerPoint? Would it be possible to get the recording for this meeting?***

- The slides from the meeting are available on the school website. We do not normally record these meetings.

***As this group faced issues in year 7&8 due to Covid situation. What steps is the school taking to support if learners have a weak base for few subjects?***

- The performance of our Year 11 and 13 students in the public examinations is that our remote learning provision, and the high levels of engagement of students during the lockdown has meant that overall, the impact on learning through the pandemic was less than it might have been.
- Across all year groups, where issues have been identified with students' knowledge and understanding, these can and have been largely addressed through making changes to the curriculum.
- We also track students' progress closely through years 10 and 11 and use a range of interventions to support students who may not be as secure in their learning as we might expect them to be. Along with other schools, the government have again provided us with a limited amount of funding for this year to provide individual or small-group tuition to students who may be particularly in need.

***How often will each subject communicate their current grade and target grade to allow for reflection? Would you inform the parents if the children are at risk of not hitting their targets?***

- We operate on a principle of three reporting points each year. At each reporting point we give you **two** pieces of information for each subject.
- The **Attitude to Learning** grade tells you about the approach the student is taking to their learning, covering their organisation and general level of effort – you will be familiar with the criteria used for the 1-5 scale which is used across years 7-11.
- We also tell you the student's **predicted** grade. This is the grade that the teacher currently thinks the student is most likely to get in the GCSE exams in Year 11 – it is based on what they do in lessons, their performance in any assessments they have taken, and their general attitude to their work. This is a much better indicator of students' likely actual achievement than a 'target' grade.

***When are the Year 10 assessments please?***

- These take place in the summer term. They are currently scheduled for the school week beginning Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May but we will confirm the dates and a timetable with students nearer the time.

***Can students be given revision check lists in all subjects before tests?***

- We don't do this as a matter of policy for routine tests, but we would expect teachers and departments to inform students broadly what they will be assessed on. At GCSE, all courses have a specification detailing the course content which students can use as a checklist to help them revise.

***To reduce pressure and anxiety, would it be possible to give students at least 2 weeks notice tests/assessments - as at the moment some subjects surprise students with tests/assessments which puts additional stress and anxiety on them and can deflate them too?***

- We do acknowledge that tests and assessments, although a necessary part of being at school, can cause anxiety for students. In our Year 10 PCS programme we have a unit of work on managing stress, which includes a lesson on how to managing examination-related stress in order to support our students.
- Some departments have trialled the approach of setting short assessed tasks in lessons without giving students notice - and there are sound pedagogical reasons for this approach in some instances. However, in general we would expect teachers to provide adequate notice of upcoming assessments and tests so students can prepare appropriately.
- If there is a specific concern with a specific subject or teacher we would encourage parents to contact the school so this can be explored with the relevant staff.

***Will there be any intervention classes after school?***

- Where we have identified particular issues that may not be easily addressed in normal lessons, we will consider additional interventions to support students. As noted on slide 13 of the presentation there are a range of interventions strategies that we can use. Teachers may choose to provide additional small group teaching during lunchtime or after school. These sessions more commonly target students in years 11-13 and normally run for a limited number of sessions.

***How are language exams taken? Will it be external person doing it or an LGS teacher?***

- GCSE language examinations cover the four areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening. The speaking element is assessed through an oral examination conducted by the normal class teachers in school. The orals take place before the main examination period. The examinations are recorded; the recordings are then sent to the examination board who assess them against the mark schemes.

***When will students be informed about Further maths?***

- Students sit an assessment in the second half of the Autumn Term in Year 11 to help them and their teachers decide whether it would be appropriate to enter Further Maths GCSE. Decisions on entries are then taken after the Christmas break. During Year 10, the focus is on covering the 'normal' GCSE Maths content.

***May I request, to have sufficient gap between DoE expedition and end of year exams?***

- The school calendar is always a compromise but we will try and ensure that activities for Year 10 are scheduled to allow them sufficient opportunity for preparation.

***How are science practicals conducted? Do the children get to practice before they take the exams?***

- Practical work forms a regular part of the science curriculum. The assessment of practical skills, apparatus and techniques forms part of the GCSE science qualifications, and students must be provided with practical science opportunities.
- Students are required to complete a set number of practical experiments during the course but their performance in these does not directly contribute to their overall grade. However the GCSE science exams have questions that require students to have a good knowledge of how to conduct practicals in order to gain high marks.

***Will there be opportunity for work experience?***

- We promote a range of online and other opportunities to students in Year 10 upwards to learn about the world of work, alongside a comprehensive careers guidance programme which helps them think about their future careers. As virtually none of our students enter the workplace directly after Year 11, the traditional Year 10 work experience element has limited value.

**What's the average proportion of students who stay on from Year 11 into the 6<sup>th</sup> Form?  
Is there a particular subject for which students from LGS go to other schools for? Are there other reasons?**

- Typically around 85-90% of the Year 11 group will stay on to our Sixth Form. Those who leave do so for a variety of reasons. Some go into the private sector, and some decide that after 5 years of travelling to school they might prefer a school closer to home. For some students a change of environment might be beneficial.
- It is worth remembering that there needs to be a good reason for changing schools for Sixth Form as it requires students to 'start again' with regard to friendships and relationships with teachers. The LGS Sixth Form offers a very broad academic programme and has an excellent track record in supporting students to gain very good A level results and access to higher education and apprenticeships. LGS offers A levels in most subjects which students would want to take; we do not offer vocational qualifications or applied subjects – every year we have one or two students who want to follow a specific pathway which can only be offered elsewhere.

**How does the school support students wishing to attain grades 8/9 for medicine/dentistry/vet/Russell group please?**

- We support students to achieve the best results they can in their GCSEs, whatever their future career path. We also make sure that students are aware of the entry requirements that some universities or courses have in terms of GCSE grades.
- In the Sixth Form we run specialist programmes to support students who are interested in particular courses or career pathways, particularly those for which additional entrance examinations or ability tests are required.

**For which careers are Degree level Apprenticeships available?**

- Degree-level Apprenticeships are available in a wide range of fields. There is more information and links to relevant sites on our website:  
<https://www.lgs.slough.sch.uk/page/?title=Resources+for+parents&pid=170>

**Due to Covid, the students missed out on developing many important skills. Do you have any plans for Year 10s to go on any school trips?**

- We have worked hard to reintroduce our trips and visits programme following the restrictions brought about from the pandemic, and have a range of visits planned this Year for Year 10. For example, students in Year 10 will have opportunity to enrol in Silver DofE and the Geography department are running residential fieldwork to Devon in the summer term.

**Is there any data available explaining link between how students in top maths / science group perform in final GCSE in terms of grades?**

**What is the procedure for students to progress through maths sets? When will this be reviewed again?**

- The setting arrangements in place across maths and sciences enable the same subject content to be taught in slightly different ways in the different groups to support all students to achieve the best grades they can.
- The setting arrangements do not place any limit on students' achievement. Although more students in the 'top' sets tend to achieve the highest grades, it is worth noting that some students in our 'lower' sets also achieve the top grades (8s and 9s) in maths and science subjects each year. Sets are reviewed based on assessment data at the end of Year 10 and again in the spring term of Year 11, and there is opportunity for students to be moved sets at these points.

**Please can students do homework in notebook rather than on iPad, as exams are written by hand?**

- Departments will use iPads in different ways to support learning, and sometimes it is more convenient for students to use particular apps for making notes. However, we recognise that examinations continue to be handwritten and we ensure that students have lots of opportunity to practice writing both in classroom and examination settings. It is worth noting that a lot of students use a stylus on their iPads so get to practise their handwriting.

***When can we have a face to face meeting in person at school - also opportunity to see the new building***

- We are considering the most effective arrangements for further meetings with parents. If the parent teacher consultation remains online, we will provide other opportunities for parents to see visit the school to see the buildings and talk with senior staff.

***Please can you make sure that students have support in writing answers based on marking scheme? When are they expected to do past papers?***

- During the GCSE courses our primary aim is to help students develop their knowledge and understanding of the subject. As part of their preparation for the examinations, they are exposed to a wide range of assessments, including examination-style questions and past papers. We ensure that students have a clear understanding of how examination questions are marked so that they can be confident when writing their responses.