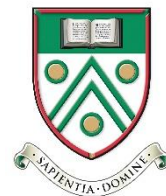


Year 11 Parents' Information Evening

26 September 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.

Is it school policy for students to be given detentions when they require additional support with a subject?

Detentions are sanctions for not doing the right things - e.g. not handing work in. Interventions to provide targeted support are definitely not a punishment, but attendance is usually not optional. Students are expected to attend, but it is for a positive purpose and it should not be considered a sanction.

Can revision be set as a Class Charts task?

Normally we would expect students to plan their own revision as everyone's needs and priorities will be different. However, teachers will sometimes set revision tasks for homework on Class Charts. Mr Pascall will be saying a bit more later about the advice we give on revision strategies.

Is it possible to get a list of subjects with the associated exam board?

On our school website there is information about the curriculum for each subject. There should be a link to the relevant exam board there.

When do you expect all the syllabus to be covered by?

We would normally expect the programmes of study to be completed by Easter. However, we incorporate a lot of revision work into the curriculum during the year, so it is not a case of leaving all revision to the end. This spacing of revision may mean that some subjects are still covering fresh content just after Easter.

Can my child get some help from year 12 students?

Our Year 12 students are very busy with their own A Level studies and we do not routinely use them to support younger students. However, we do run a progress mentoring scheme for a small number of students in Year 11 using students in year 12 where we feel this is appropriate. The students are selected by the school rather than in response to suggestions from parents.

***What is the syllabus for the GCSE Mock Exams due this year at school?
Any dates finalised for December mocks?***

The GCSE practice exams ('mocks') will be held during the first two weeks of December - the exact timetable has not yet been finalised.

With respect to the 'levelling down' of GCSE grades comparable to pre-pandemic levels, is this something that we as parents need to be concerned about as it almost seems like the students will be disadvantaged somehow? Is there something that we need to support them with to try to ensure we can buffer the reductions?

It's a good question, but we don't think so. There has been a national 'levelling down' in 2022 - but our students results went up. We think the work we do on assessments and the way we support the students with interventions where required provides the advantage they need.

When will the assessments for further maths be held, please? And when do we get to know the outcome? Who can take the further maths assessment? How does the further maths assessment affect sets? Will the further maths test change sets?

The assessments to identify suitability for GCSE Further Maths entries take place in November, with decisions made on entries by early in the Spring Term. Students will be informed of the outcome. Students in the top and middle sets for mathematics have the opportunity to take the assessment. This may result in some movement of students between sets in the Spring Term, so that the students who have entered can be taught the required content, but this will depend on which students and how many end up being entered for Further Maths.

Can you please elaborate on Sixth Form Interviews?

Sixth Form interviews are meetings with senior staff to look at the suitability of subject choices. These are normally held in February/March. We are interested in how students' subject choices relate to potential higher education or career plans, and whether they have demonstrated the potential to be successful in those subjects. We also talk about having back-up plans if the practice exam results are teachers' predicted grades suggest students might not meet the entry requirements for the LGS Sixth Form.

What is the GCSE grade boundary that allows children to take up that subject for A-level?

Generally speaking, a GCSE grade 6 is needed to take a subject like History, Geography etc. for A Level. Grade 7s are required for science subjects and for Maths - and there is no flexibility in this. Further information is on our website in the Sixth Form admissions section.

How well school is prepared with teacher absenteeism, in case of Covid or some other reason. Any special preparation that will give us some confidence?

Obviously we are hoping that teacher's absence can be minimised. Teachers or subject leaders will always set work for short absences. Where teachers are absent for longer periods we can bring in supply cover. However, please remember that every school is in the same position.

When students are choosing a subject for A levels during March, senior staff members guide them on which ones to take further. Sixth form subject choices - is it student's decision alone as long as subject is offered at school and GCSE grades allowed?

Sixth Form subject choices should be primarily the students' decision. However, there is a structured programme to help students make these very important choices based on accurate information. Our role is to advise them on the suitability of a particular set of choices in relation to their higher education or career intentions, and whether they are likely to enjoy the subjects and be successful in them.

Any reason for not having PTCs face to face this year?

Can I please request that Parent and Teacher consultations take place in school rather than online, I find the online system is not good, I'm sure other parents feel the same.

It would be helpful if Year 11 PTC are face to face and as parents we get some more time to ask questions? 5 mins in PTCs is not enough to get feedback, can you please increase it to 10 mins?

We recognise there are mixed views about online PTCs. Many parents actually prefer them as they do not have to travel to the school and can fit the appointments easily around other commitments. However, other parents prefer face to face contact.

Even when we ran face-to-face PTCs, the time for appointments was 5 minutes. Teachers have a lot of students to see – a class of 30 students with 5 minutes each would take 2 and a half hours if everyone kept to time – and we also need to ensure teachers get breaks during these events. If we doubled the length of PTC appointment times, teachers could only be able to see half the number of students. Unfortunately, we also often found that when some appointments went on longer, it did cause annoyance for other parents who are waiting who may then miss their appointment time.

The aim of the PTC is to provide key points and areas to address, not an in-depth discussion. If there are serious concerns, these can be followed up separately with the appropriate staff outside the PTC.

Please advise what would happen if your child was ill on the day of their exam (either mock exam or the real exam)?

For the practice exams, we would normally try and give the student an opportunity to take the paper as soon as possible afterwards. For the real exams, there is a standard procedure whereby we notify the exam board and ask the parent to provide medical evidence. Students cannot take a real GCSE paper on another occasion, but special consideration can be given and a grade can still be awarded on the basis of the remaining papers they have taken.

Are Sixth form subject entry requirements are based on predicted scores or mock/test scores?

We make conditional offers of places based on predicted grades. Those predictions are themselves based on practice examinations but also on other assessments and teachers' judgement. If the predicted grades are low, we would encourage students to have a back-up plan in case they don't qualify to return to our Sixth Form. However, final entry to the Sixth Form is based on the results students actually get in August, and we will always take our Year 11 students into the Sixth Form if they qualify and enrol with us on results day. Some students do better or worse than expected in particular subjects, which means they ask to do different A level subjects to the ones they originally chose. We always do our best to accommodate these changes of mind.

Can the Tier decision for GCSE French and German be known earlier than spring term, as this will help students to prepare earlier accordingly?

The decision about the tier of entry from languages is taken as late as possible to allow the students time to really demonstrate what they are likely to be capable of achieving. If they are entered for the lower tier, they have less preparation to do and there is still sufficient time to prepare them well for the foundation tier papers.

When do a student get taster sessions for subjects they are not familiar with at GCSE level, like Economics psychology etc.?

This is done as part of the programme of support to help students choose their subjects. They have a talk about each subject and are given the opportunity to experience it in a bit more depth during the Sixth Form Taster Week.