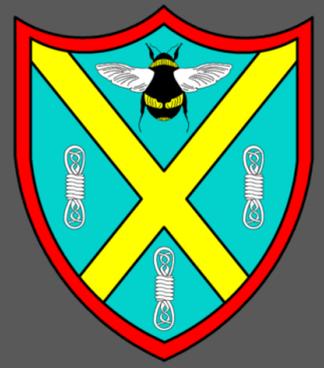


Countdown

PARENT EDITION 14



Welcome to the first edition of Countdown or to give its full title:

“Countdown to Year 11 Exams: How to prepare for them so you don’t get stressed and can cope with them in your stride, giving yourself every opportunity to achieve at your full potential”

We’ll stick with “Countdown”

This first edition is aimed at our Year 11 parents, and offers a few quick tips to get everything ready for exam glory in your house!



Parents’ Revision Evening

Tuesday 7th November

7.00pm

The Great Hall, Stratton

COUNTDOWN

24 school days until the start of the Year 11 Mocks

63 days to Christmas (as long as you read this on October 20th)

85 school days until the start of study leave

**13 EDITIONS OF
COUNTDOWN TO GO**

Parents of Stratton - We need you!

We want to make the Year 11 mocks a fantastic opportunity for students to practice every aspect of the exam process including celebrating success. We want 3/4 of the grades we give out to be no more than a grade away from our students’ targets. We want our students to push themselves to achieve and rehearse how good revision will pay off.

In the run up to the exams which take place between the 12th and 18th of December, teachers will be guiding revision and practising the skills required to storm the mocks!

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP?

Take a keen interest: Talk to your child about their work, what they have learnt, what they are concerned about and how they are preparing to make the most of Year 11. When the November Progress Check is released (w/c Nov 13) discuss the outcomes, praise success but help students identify gaps between their projected grade (what teachers think is the most likely exam outcome) and target grade (an ambitious grade based on achievement at Key Stage 2 – Year 6 SATs)

Ensure students engage in home study: Most of our students complete their homework, but those who go on to do really well at GCSE will already be setting aside time to review their learning from the start of the course, ensuring they remember and understand all they have been taught. Typically, these students will be devoting 10-15 hours a week in study at the moment and this will be likely to increase further in the new year. However, if that is not happening, going from the bare minimum to an organised 15 hours per week can feel daunting. For some students it is enough simply to plan when they will study, for others they may need to build up to the target of 15 hours a week over a 2 or 3 week period.

Ensure students have a quiet place to study: make it a family priority not to disturb, but do check to ensure time is not being wasted.

Provide study materials: Including revision guides, practise exam questions, lined and plain paper and stationary. The school may be able to assist in the purchase of these materials so do not hesitate to contact us if you are concerned about the cost.

Help plan a study timetable: identify the hours that can be put aside for study over the course of the week, ensure students are planning to devote appropriate time to each subject, prioritising English and maths but also focussing time to weaker subjects. Monitor the plan, and don't be afraid to revise if learning priorities change or sessions are missed.

Try to clear the “family” decks: it goes without saying that attendance at school is vital, but if possible, try not to have too many other commitments during this period that takes time away from study. Where key events are known, eg family celebrations, share this so students can plan around it.

Do be pragmatic: Students will need downtime, and by ensuring work is completed to plan there will still be time for socialising. If students are sticking to their plan for the main part (say 80%) parents can be relaxed in the knowledge that they are doing enough to make a difference. So the short notice invitation to a party or other event can be accepted without worry.

Don't listen to your friends! I'm sure they're lovely but, In our experience parents of keen learners have been known to over exaggerate the number of hours their offspring are studying (“she's in at 4 and doesn't put her books down until 11! We have to leave her meals outside her bedroom door!). Conversely, virtually all students tend to downplay how hard their working (“you did really well in that test” “Nah, just lucky”). The plain truth is all students need to work hard for their GCSEs. By starting now and aiming for the Mocks, students can spread the load over a longer period of time which is beneficial to long term learning as well far less stressful.

ACHIEVEMENT
*is largely the product of
steadily raising one's
levels of aspirations and
expectations*