

Dear parent/carer,

I am writing to you to give you an update of our Year 11 cohort, and to share information about aspects of the support package that we have in place for our Year 11 children during this crucial year.

Attendance and behaviour

As you are aware, excellent attendance is an expectation of all students at Heworth Grange. The attendance of our Year 11 cohort is steadily increasing, meaning that more students are profiting from the teaching, learning and support in school. As we move even closer to final exams, I ask for your continued support in ensuring your child is in school each and every day, giving them the best chance of success as they sit their formal examinations.

Additional learning

I am pleased to report that the vast majority of our Year 11 students have been engaging fully with our programme of additional learning which takes place in school every Wednesday and Thursday from 14:45 to 15:25. Since the mock examinations in November 2022, the additional learning groups have been updated so that students are working in a subject where the most gains can be made. Thank you for your support in encouraging your child to attend and engage in these sessions; our teachers are planning carefully to address learning gaps for each group, and we know from previous year groups that these sessions have a positive impact on student progress and attainment.

Mock examinations

The first round of mock examinations took place in November 2022. You will have received a grade profile for your child on the back of these examinations, and teachers in school have worked hard to use the data from these exams to inform their planning of teaching and revision in school. The next round of mock examinations will take place in the weeks straight after the February half-term; it is crucial that students are prepared for these examinations and are in school for all of the mock examination period. They are a crucial part of the support to ensure students are ready to complete their final exams.

Revision support for parents and carers

We will be inviting parents and carers to come into school to hear from key staff in school about how you can support your child to do effective revision, even when you are not experts in a particular subject. Please watch out for further communication on this event; we would love to see you there!

Revision planner for students

In the coming week, all of our Year 11 students will be given a revision planner to support them in organising their revision in the run up to the mock examinations. Please talk to your child about their revision planner, and use it as a tool to check that they are completing revision for all of their subjects in advance of the next round of mock examinations.

Core subject residential

We have secured funding to take 50 students on a residential to Dukeshouse Wood in Hexham. The residential will focus on the development of key skills in English, mathematics, and science, supporting students to make necessary gains in these subjects. Students who are involved with the residential have been informed in separate communications.

Examinations overview

Please see overleaf for a summary of information about the Year 11 exams that your child will be sitting in the summer exam series. I hope that this information is useful to you. We are also soon to launch a new section of our school website which will have further support around exams and revision. We will write to you to let you know once this section of the website has gone live online.

I will write to you again next half-term with another Year 11 update. Should you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch via. Heworth Grange Enquiries.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J Hulse
Deputy Headteacher (Quality of Education)

The Year 11 examination series – information for parents and carers

Key learning from last year

- ✓ Students who had good attendance made better progress and achieved better outcomes overall
- ✓ Students who engaged consistently in their lessons made better progress overall

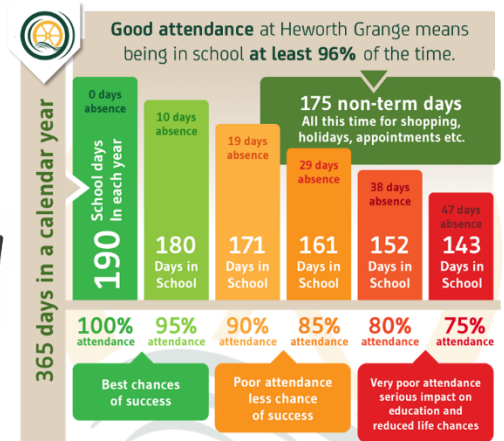
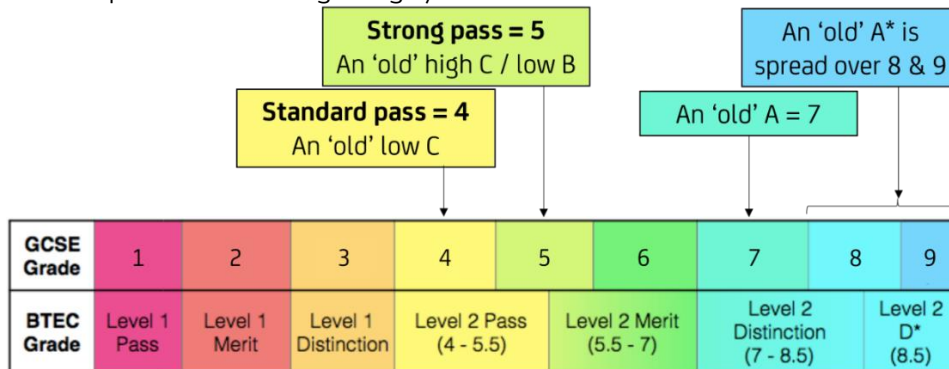
Examination dates for Year 11

- Mock GCSE exams (2)
Monday 27th February to Friday 10th March 2023
- Formal GCSE exams – all subjects
From 15th May 2023 to the end of June 2023



The 'new' grading system in the exams

In 2017, the grading system for GCSE exams changed from the 'old' A*-G grades to a 'new' 9-1 grading system. This is mapped out in the diagram below, with some reference points to the 'old' grading system included.



DID YOU KNOW? A two week holiday in term time means that the highest attendance you can achieve is 94.7%

Some other changes to the examination system are outlined below, with a brief explanation of what that means.

Change in exams	What does this mean to me?
Removal of tiered papers in all but maths, science and languages.	All 9 grades spread over an exam so students might not be able to answer all of the questions.
Coursework has been removed from the majority of subjects.	Students will be judged only on the exam, making these even more important.
There is an increased literacy focus included in all exams.	Anywhere between 10 and 15% of exams are marked for literacy so this needs to be a focus for students.
Exam questions have a reading age of 16 and very high word count.	Students must be able to read and understand the exam language at a high speed. The context of language is extremely important.
The GCSEs are more challenging.	Students having to sit more exams, which are longer e.g., combined science has 6 exams and triple science has 9 exams.

The importance of the mock examinations



It is important for students to engage properly in the mock examinations.

- ✓ Knowing the 'feel' of an exam; a 'dry run' to practise under exam conditions
- ✓ Identifying gaps in learning with enough time to repair them
- ✓ Practising effective revision strategies
- ✓ Motivation to get revising early for the formal exams

Keeping healthy through the exam seasons

We know that Year 11 can be a challenging and stressful time for your child, and although we will do all we can to support them in school, there are some things that we can all do to make sure that they are getting things right. A healthy mind and body is as important for success as a revision booklet, and some healthy choices out of school can make a real difference. The table below has some useful links and apps for parents, carers and students.

For parents and carers	For students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.youngminds.org.uk/parent • www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers • www.weheartcbt.com/for-parents • Every Mind Matters – NHS www.nhs.uk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.youngminds.org.uk • www.childline.org.uk • www.kooth.com • www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind