



24 April 2018

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Dear Parents and Carers

We are fast approaching the point where we say goodbye and good luck to your child as they begin their GCSE exams. In this letter you will find useful information including important dates, arrangements during the exam period and guidance in supporting your child over the coming weeks.

Year 11 Final Day – Wednesday 16 May. Year 11 will be dismissed from school at 3.15pm. There will be a formal opportunity for students to sign each other's shirts if they wish to do so. However, they **must** have a spare unsigned shirt to wear when they attend exams.

After Wednesday 16 May, students will be expected:

- To be in school when they have an exam.
- To attend 'drop down' sessions in their exam subject areas unless told otherwise. These may take place in blocks of time or during normal lessons.
- To enter the school via the reception and remain in the café area until staff direct them towards the exam venues. Students must sign in at reception and wear full school uniform.
- A space will be provided for students to work between lessons if required. Staff will ordinarily be available during their normal lesson times, if students need some additional support.
- The last exam involving significant numbers of students will be Friday 22 June 2018. Any students who need to attend school after this date will sign in at reception as if they were a visitor to the school.

Teachers will be available in normal lesson time to offer personalised support and guidance and we expect students to take full advantage of this prior to them completing their exam. Maths and English will also have group revision sessions during this time, please encourage your child to attend these sessions. Drop down sessions are compulsory. In real terms, this means that there will be very little independent study leave. However, where there is, it is vital that students use it appropriately. A study room will also be provided for students to use during lunch times and between lessons if required.

Protocols to be followed:

- Students must arrive at school in plenty of time for all exams at least 30 minutes before the advertised start time. Students who are late will not be permitted into the examination room.
- In most instances, subject teachers will arrange for warm up sessions for the exams; students will be given details by subject teachers.
- It is vitally important that students wear uniform for all exams otherwise they will not be allowed to enter the exam room.
- All equipment to be taken into an exam must be in a clear plastic case or bag.
- Bags, coats or phones cannot be taken into the exam hall.
- Students must adhere to the strict rules of the exam hall and follow the instructions of invigilators without question.
- We expect students to take full responsibility for their conduct during the exam period and to ensure they behave in an appropriate manner at all times; they will not be allowed to remain on site if they do not have a genuine reason to be here. The same rules apply as usual for conduct off site.

Year 11 'Drop Down' sessions

Attached to this letter are a list of the 'drop down' sessions year 11 students are expected to attend during their GCSE examinations. We have tried to time these to take place just before their exams and they are aimed at providing bespoke last minute guidance. It has, unfortunately, not been logistically possible to do this for every exam simply because there are often multiple exams at one time. This timetable will also be available on our year 11 support and guidance page on the school website. Please keep a watch on this page as it is an important source of communication during the exam period.

Returning of equipment:

- Students are expected to return all books and equipment given to them by subject teachers by Friday 22 June 2018.

- Students may be charged for any unreturned resources so it is important that they return all books and equipment.

Failure to attend an examination

- Students have been formally entered for all their exams at a significant cost to the school. A failure to turn up to an exam will result in the parent and student being invoiced for the cost of the exam. A failure to turn up to an exam will also need to be reflected in any reference the school may write for the student if they are continuing at another institution, or will likely impact upon their progression to the 6th form if they are intending to stay at Thomas Tallis school. The current cost per exam is £35.00 per exam, per subject. If there is an emergency on the day of an exam, then the school exams office should be contacted immediately.

Preparation

As we enter the final few weeks before the GCSE exams start, it is vital that you help encourage your child to use all available time wisely. Students in Year 11 must have a revision timetable specifying the time they are using to focus on the various subject areas each week. Your child should be doing at least three hours a night during term time, and around five hours each day during weekends. Please do monitor and support your child through these last few weeks as we have tended to find that a positive approach outside of school makes the biggest difference to final GCSE outcomes.

If you need any guidance or support, please remember to visit our Year 11 dedicated page on the website (<http://www.thomastallischool.com/year-11-support--guidance.html>) where you will find links to revision advice, subject websites, timetables for revision support and much more. Finally, it is worth reminding you that students also have access to GCSE Pod and MathsWatch, together providing a huge amount of interactive teaching and support for students in most subject areas. We do hope that you can support your child to use their time wisely and, if they need a little motivation, maybe remind them of the extremely long holiday they get once their exams are finished in June.

This will also be a very stressful and demanding time for students and I hope you do all you can to help them through this by ensuring they get enough sleep, eat well and have a space to revise. Please continue to contact tutors or myself if you have concerns and we will do what we can to resolve any issues.

Year 11 Prom

The Year 11 prom is being held in school on Thursday 5 July 2018 from 6:30pm until 11.00pm. Tickets will be available via the school WisePay system and need to be purchased by Friday 25 May 2018 and collected from Ms Dedman.

The Prom is for our Year 11 students only and we will not allow entry to anyone we do not know. We reserve the right to refuse entry to any student who behaves inappropriately during the exam period or on the prom night itself.

I would like to thank you for all your support, especially at this crucial time and look forward to a very successful exam period for all of Year 11.

Year 11 Leaving Ceremony - Friday 6 July 2018

The Year 11 leaving ceremony will take place on Friday 6 July 2018 at 2pm. This is an opportunity for parents and carers to celebrate their child's time at Tallis.

Yours sincerely

Michelle Dedman
Head of Year 11

Ashley Tomlin
Principal Deputy Headteacher