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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, important dates, arrangements for the exam period and support and guidance for your child over the coming weeks.

Year 11's Final Day is Friday 10 May 2019. They will be dismissed from school at 3.15 pm. 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 for exams.

After Friday 10 May, students are expected:

- to be in school when they have an exam.
- to attend 'drop down' sessions in their exam subject areas as on the enclosed timetable. These are specially organised sessions before each exam with specialist subject teachers, on revision activities and final examination preparation.

Outside of examinations and 'drop down' sessions, teachers will be available in normal lesson time to offer personalised support and guidance. We will also provide a study room for students to use during lunch times and between exams.

These are the rules for students during the exams:

- Students must enter school through main reception and remain in the caféteria until staff direct them to the exam rooms.
- 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 and they should always be there.
- It is vitally important that students wear uniform for all exams. They will not be allowed to enter the exam room otherwise.
- 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 follow the strict rules of the exam hall and the instructions of invigilators without question.
- We expect students to take full responsibility for their good conduct during the exam period and to behave properly at all times.
- Students may not remain on site without a genuine reason. Once the exams start, we don't have spare rooms to put them in and we must keep the site quiet.
- The same rules apply as usual for conduct off-site.
- The last exam involving significant numbers of students will be Friday 14 June 2019. Any students who need to attend school after this date will sign in at reception as if they were visitors to the school, please.

Year 11 'Drop Down' sessions

As above, attached to this letter are a list of the 'drop down' sessions year 11 students are expected to attend during their GCSE examinations. This timetable will also be available on our year 11 support and guidance page on the school website. Please watch this page as it is an important source of communication during the exam period.

Returning equipment:

- Students are expected to return all books and equipment back to subject teachers by Friday 21 June 2019.
- Students may be charged for any unreturned resources so it is important that they bring everything back. We can't afford to replace them and we need them for younger students.

Failure to attend an examination

- School has already paid for all exam entries: £35.00 per exam, per subject. If a student fails to turn up for an exam, we will charge parents for the cost of the exam.
- We mention failure to turn up to an exam in any reference the school writes for students continuing at another institution
- We will probably withdraw any offer of a post-16 place at Tallis to any student who does not turn up for an exam unless there is the kind of exceptional emergency acceptable to the examination board. These are, thankfully, extremely rare.
- 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 work with your child to use all available time wisely and ensure they attend school every single day. 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

two hours a night during term time
four hours a day during weekends and holidays.

Please monitor and support your child through these last few weeks as we know that a positive approach outside school makes the biggest difference to final GCSE results.

You will notice that we are not running a large programme of revision sessions this Easter, as has been our practice in recent years. 'Intervention' of this kind is less common in many schools now as teachers have observed that such sessions do not have a direct impact on student learning and progress. While that may sound odd, we have discovered it to be true here too: students tend to see revision sessions as an alternative to independent work. It is only independent work that is fixed in their heads and retrievable in the examination rooms. As mentioned, there will be drop-down days for all subjects in the period between Easter and the exams.

If you need any guidance or support, please remember to visit our Year 11 dedicated page on the website (www.thomastallischool.com/year-11-support--guidance). Here you'll find links to revision advice, subject websites, timetables for revision support and much more.

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

Year 11 Prom

The Year 11 prom is being held in school on Thursday 4 July 2019 from 6:30 pm until 11.00 pm. Tickets will be available via the school WisePay system and need to be purchased by Friday 24 May and collected from Mr Brunoir.

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 badly during the exams or on the prom night itself.

Year 11 Leaving Ceremony -

The Year 11 leaving ceremony will take place on Friday 5 July 2019 at 2.00 pm. This is an opportunity for parents and carers to celebrate their child's time at Tallis.

We 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.

Yours sincerely



Mickael Brunoir
Head of Year 11



Ashley Tomlin
Principal Deputy Headteacher