

Re: Mid-year exams for Years 7 to 9

Dear Parent/Guardian,

In December 2016, a document was published outlining details of the new NTS assessment system for Years 7 to 9, along with full details of the relevant subject standard descriptors. Having completed the first full year of our new system, and in the light of experiences gained from the first round of new GCSE examinations, the information has been amended. However, the core principles and processes within our system remain unchanged. All documentation relating to assessment and curriculum can be found on the school website.

As we approach the mid-year point, subject staff will conduct their mid-year exam, aimed at testing knowledge, understanding and skills using GCSE-style questions adapted for the demands of each curriculum year.

The mid-year exam takes place in lessons, with each department having their own plan based upon their curriculum allocation and individual teacher timetables. For these reasons, pupils do not receive an exam schedule.

The majority of exams are usually no more than 50 minutes each. Marks and grades are shared with pupils as per the normal expectations of the school with regards to marking and feedback. Then, the evidence from the mid-year exam is combined with other assessed outcomes to create the Current Grade reported in the Progress Review (or Full Report for Year 9).

Pupils will be tasked with revising, with many subjects devoting time to help pupils discover their preferred and most effective revision strategies. (However, we do not 'teach to the test'). Revision should feature specifically as part of each pupil's homework over the next few weeks.

Pupils have nothing to fear, especially as new GCSEs and A Levels have reverted to a regime of 100% assessment by examination in most subjects. Our mid-year exams are a stepping stone on the path towards being ready for the 'real thing', and are a normal part of school routine.

Kind regards

Mr N Parker

Deputy Head - Curriculum