



ST EDWARD'S OXFORD

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To Parents of the Fifth Form

Dear Parents,

You will find on the Parent Portal of the school website the first of this term's two grades and comments cards. As usual, tutors and HMs will be pleased to hear from you if you would like to discuss any aspect of the card. You can gain access to the Portal by using the code that was sent to you in December. If you have any problems with the system, please email pass.web@stedwards.oxon.sch.uk giving as many details as possible.

I hope that you found the recent parents' meeting to be a helpful experience, both in the conversations about current progress towards GCSE and in considering future academic plans. It was good to see many parents at the session in the North Wall prior to the teacher/parent conversations. We were keen to stress at this meeting the vital status of the three-week Easter break as a time when we expect a large amount of worthwhile revision to be done. We invite parents to take an active interest in this revision. To that end, we shall send to all parents in March our 'How to Revise for GCSE' booklet, which gives general and subject-specific revision advice. Pupils sometimes fall short of the GCSE grades they could have achieved rather because they do not have a mind-set for revision than because they find a subject intrinsically hard. The 'How to Revise' booklet, of which pupils will also have a copy, gives down-to-earth, practical advice. In the end, the spadework simply has to be done and the three-week Easter holiday is critical for this. Along with the booklet, parents will also receive (as will pupils, of course) a subject-by-subject breakdown of what needs to be revised. This will, in some cases, include links to expanded revision materials on the shared area of the school website.

Parents often ask 'how much time should we expect our son or daughter to revise for in the holiday'? It is difficult to give hard-and-fast rules as much depends on the individual. One rule of thumb might be to suggest working the lesson times of a school day Monday-Friday (34 x 40 minutes, each 40-minute slot divided into 2 x 20 minutes on two different topics). This has the advantage of structuring the revision in manageable episodes as well as giving a large amount of free time!

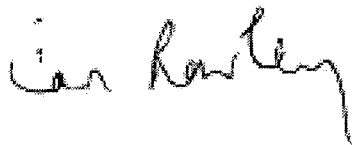
All our pupils have been reminded that GCSE grades are not just a worthwhile end in themselves but also vital evidence of their fitness to study at competitive universities. These universities look carefully at GCSE grades as well as at A-level and IB predictions. A good GCSE profile is often the first hurdle to be cleared in gaining access to good university courses.

It is worth noting that there will be a significant number of GCSE examinations in the first half of the summer term: before half-term, there will be examinations in French, German, Spanish, Italian, RS, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, PE, Maths, Design, Classical Civilisation. If you would like to see the full timetable for the exams, please have a look at the school's

website: under 'Academic', you will find 'Exam timetables'. In the build-up to the revision for these exams, we have added a fourth prep each night for all Fifth Formers. This is a dedicated revision prep and is used by Departments to introduce revision in bite-size portions! We hope that the revision mountain, when it comes in the Easter holiday, will be less arduous to climb as a result and that our guides to what and how to revise will be helpful for pupils and parents alike.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ian Hawley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.