

Exam Information Evening FAQs

Q: The mock exams timetable is much more intensive than the actual exams. This was a source of stress and exhaustion for my child in the summer. Could this be reconsidered in the future? It led to a period of absence and a couple of missed exams for my child.

Q: Why only Core Mocks again in March can this be extended to all Subjects?

A: As per the two questions above, there are differing views as to how many series of mocks there should be and how many exams there should be. We seek to strike the right balance, taking into account the following: that pupils know what to expect of the exams; that teachers are provided with more information as to what pupils know and don't know so that teaching and intervention can be targeted; that we still maintain as much curriculum time as possible.

We recognise that pupils do not learn more by excessive testing, but that the act of sitting the test is instructive for most.

Q: What proactive mental health support is the school providing for children?

A: Pupils have been reminded about key members of staff they can talk to about exams, or anything else. Equally, pupils are encouraged to speak to any member of staff they wish.

Form tutors play a pivotal role in identifying those children who may be struggling.

Information is being shared with pupils as we believe that knowing key information and being prepared is a significant way to mitigate what is always likely to be a stressful time.

As a parent, if you have concerns that we do not know about, please do tell us. We have committed and capable members of staff (form tutors, Student Support Officers, Head of Year and more) who are able to assist.

Q: As there is only 1 Science paper. Is the whole syllabus content going to be tested?

A: No. The Science team will select information that the pupils have been taught. The content will be taken from across the course to reflect that there is only one paper at this time. In science and other subjects where the whole of the course is not yet covered (it's still November in Year 11), leaders/teachers are undertaking thorough quality control of the exams that are being set. The key is that we want mock exams to enable us to identify the suitable next steps to improve future outcomes.

Q: Do pupils need transparent pencil cases and clear water bottles for the mocks?

A: Yes please. All pupils require this for the mocks as they did for the Year 10 Exams. This enables them to be prepared and for our invigilators to be able to check when students are entering the room. Further information as to what is required and what is/is not allowed is provided in the "KS4 and KS5 Examination Guide 2023-2024" document (hard copy already shared with pupils).

Q: How can pupils prepare effectively if they have not received all the things the child thinks will help them to prepare (e.g. a poetry anthology)?

A: If you have concerns in a particular subject, please contact the class teacher in the first instance. It is likely that there is a rationale for choices that get made. If you have any questions about a subject, please contact teachers. Details as to how to do this are available on the Staff page of the Academy website.

Q: Is there a full timetable of revision classes that can be shared with parents?

A: Yes. This has been shared as part of this communication.

Q: Do children have access to practice exam papers via the school?

A: Provided as part of this communication is the “Exam board and codes” document. This contains links to relevant past papers, enabling pupils to set their own work. This will run alongside teachers’ use of past papers in lessons as they deem appropriate.

Q: What happens if child gets COVID in the mocks period?

A: Please report absence in the normal way. If a pupil is absent for an extended period, we would endeavour to have them sit any missed exams within the mock exam period, but recognise this may not be possible. We believe it is beneficial to pupils to sit mock exams, but will ultimately treat longer absences on a case by case basis.

Q: Will children have lessons during the mock exam period?

A: If pupils do not have an exam then they are expected to be in normal timetabled lessons.

Q: Can the slides for this be shared for the key details please.

A: Yes, they are shared as part of this communication.

The answers to these questions may duplicate information shared elsewhere. If you have questions that are not covered here, please check the “KS4 and KS5 Exam Information 2023-2024” document in the first instance.