



Y11 November Mocks

Parent information and guidance pack

13th October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Year 11 have been working hard since their return to school and are now well into their preparations for the upcoming mock exams. The mocks themselves will take place from Monday 9th November to Friday 13th November. Please note there is also a Science exam just after half term on Wednesday 4th November. This is a vital opportunity for us to get further insight into pupils' knowledge and understanding so that we can plan our future teaching and interventions accordingly. It is also an opportunity for pupils, who should use the mocks to set specific goals, target areas of weakness and develop confidence in their subject knowledge and exam technique. Replicating the challenge of sitting multiple exams during a condensed period is also invaluable as it prepares pupils for the nature of the real thing. This time can be very stressful for pupils so careful planning, organisation and preparation are essential. In this pack you will find further information and guidance that will enable you to support your child through the next few weeks.

November Mock Exams:

Pupils have been provided with a mock exam timetable that outlines the individual exams they will sit each day. They have also been given a blank revision timetable to help structure their revision at home over the next few weeks. We ask that pupils start their preparations well in advance by spending 2-3 hours a night as well as weekends revising for the mocks. Pupils should also be using the science of learning strategies and refining exam technique by writing out practice questions. The aim behind this is to give them the appropriate toolkit for study and revision in order to maximise success. We know many of our highest performing pupils are also our hardest workers, and all pupils need to understand this in order to achieve their full potential. As parents, we would ask that you play your part, work with the school and encourage your child.

“If you are revising properly and maximising your time in lessons, it’s probably going to be okay. If you aren’t, it probably isn’t.”

What we mean by this is that as the examination season approaches, it is largely what pupils and their families do that makes the biggest difference.

T: 01234 332299 E: info@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk Bedford Free School, 12-16 Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AD

RESPECT • HONESTY • HIGH EXPECTATIONS

The most important thing you can do as a parent at this stage is to help them plan exactly what they will need to do to give themselves the best chance of success. Please monitor and ensure that pupils are using and sticking to their revision timetables.

Progress Evenings

This will be a vital opportunity to review your child's progress and discuss areas for improvement with their subject teachers following the mocks. In light of the current social distancing regulations, progress evening will not be able to take place in the normal way with parents and pupils coming into school. We will contact you again with further details about exactly how we will run a virtual event, but for the time being may I ask that you put the following date in your diary:

Thursday 26th November 2020:

Y11 Progress Evening

Support for pupils suffering from exam anxiety

The realisation of the challenge ahead in Year 11 can be overwhelming at the best of times and particularly this year following the disruption caused by the pandemic. It is important pupils feel prepared and confident as we approach the mock exams and real GCSEs. We have planned to offer pupils regular exam and revision briefings in order to help them structure and manage their time effectively. There is further guidance in this pack about how you can support your child with managing any exam anxiety and how pupils can best look after themselves. If you have any concerns about how your child is coping with Year 11 please do get in touch with our pastoral team and we will ensure that we can provide them the appropriate support.

We understand that Year 11 can be as challenging for family life as it is for the pupils themselves and it is our sincere aim to support you and your child in any way we can through this demanding but also exciting year.

May I also take the opportunity to remind you that our "Making the Most of Year 11" video will be released on Monday 19th October, where we give further information about the year ahead.

Yours faithfully,



Tom Wood
Assistant Principal



Year 11 Mocks: Week beginning 9th November 2020

Please carefully read your mock timetable below. Highlight the different subjects / exams you will sit for each option block. You must be very clear about what you will be examined on and when. Organisation and preparation are essential in order to be successful. During each lesson over the next week complete the table on the opposite side with guidance from your subject teacher. Remember you are climbing the mountain to success...

	Wed 4th	Mon 9th	Tues 10th	Wed 11th	Thu 12th	Fri 13th	Mon 16th
Exam 1 -9.35am – 11.20		English Language	Maths 1 (Non-calculator)	Science 2 (Chemistry Paper 1)	Option D Art (no exam) Drama PE RE	Maths 3 (Calculator)	Catch up day
Lunch 11:25-12:15							
Exam 2 12.15- 2.15		Science Biology Paper 2	Option C Art (no exam) Computing Geography 1 History 1 Spanish (Reading)	Maths 2 (Calculator)	Science 3 (Physics Paper 1)	Geography 2 & Catch Up session	
Break 14.10-14.30							
Exam 3 2.30	Science Biology Paper 1	Option A Drama French (R+L) Geography 1 Spanish (Reading)	Option B French (Reading and Listening) Geography 1 History Music Design Technology	English Literature	French & Spanish (Writing) ----- Spanish (Listening)	History 2 & Catch Up session	

Speak to your subject teachers and make sure you are clear about what you will potentially be examined on during your November mocks. For each subject / exam complete the table below so you can begin to target your revision more explicitly. This must be completed by Friday 16th October to give you the best possible chance of success.

Subject	Name of paper	Length of paper	What do I need to revise to be successful? Which units will this exam cover?
English	Literature	1hr 45min	
	Language	1hr 45min	
Maths	Paper 1: Non-Calculator	1hr 30min	
	Paper 2: Calculator	1hr 30min	
	Paper 3: Calculator	1hr 30min	
Science	Biology (Paper 1)	C: 1hr 10min T: 1hr 45min	
	Biology (Paper 2)	C: 1hr 10min T: 1hr 45min	
	Chemistry (Paper 1)	C: 1hr 10min T: 1hr 45min	
	Physics (Paper 1)	C: 1hr 10min T: 1hr 45min	
MFL Spanish / French	Listening	F: 35min H: 45min	
	Writing	F: 1hr H: 1hr 15min	
	Reading	F: 45min H: 1hr	
History	1: Reformation & Castles	1 hr 15 mins	
	2: Power	1hr	
Geography	1: Physical Geography	1hr 15 mins	
	2: Human Geography	1hr	
PE	Fitness and Body Systems	1hr 45min	
Music	Unit 3 Listening and Appraising	1hr 45min	
Drama	Component 3 – written exam	1 hr 30 min	
DT	Design Technology	1hr 45min	
Computing	Computer Systems	1hr 30min	
RE	Christianity, Islam & philosophy	2hrs	Christianity (Beliefs, Teachings AND Practices), Islam (Beliefs and Teachings ONLY) and Philosophy and Ethics (Families and Relationships and Peace and Conflict)

Y11 Half-term revision plan**Name:****Tutor group:**

To be successful in your mocks you need to plan your time carefully. It will not be enough to cram over half term or the week before your mocks. Your brain can't and won't be able to handle it. To be effective you will also need to combine the different science of learning strategies. Use the plan below to carefully allocate your subject revision sessions and consider what, when and how you will revise (using the six strategies for effective learning). Do not forget to give yourself breaks and don't panic if you can't always stick to your schedule. Remember it is a marathon you are running not the 100 meters.

Time	Monday 26/10	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
Lunch							
13:00							
14:00							
15:00							
16:00							
17:00							

After Half-Term: Revision Plan for Evenings and Weekends

Monday 2/11	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Monday 9/11	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

Year 11 November Mocks

Information and Advice for Students

Revision

The only way to ensure your success is to do lots and lots of revision. You should be spending about 2-3hrs a night consolidating your knowledge, checking your understanding and honing your exam technique. Use the blank revision timetable to design your revision plan and then ensure you stick to it. Give yourself breaks and ensure you get lots of sleep. But also make sure that you **revise in the most effective way**. The key strategies are shown on the next page. But the most important is retrieval practice.

Retrieval Practice- Practice bringing information to mind without the help of materials. Recalling information without supporting materials helps us learn it much more effectively. Take as many knowledge quizzes or practice tests as you can get your hands on. You can also make flashcards to test yourself on key concepts, words or ideas – but make sure you don't just read the cards. You have to make the mental effort to try and remember.

- Brain dump – write everything you know about a topic on a blank piece of paper
- Look, cover, write, check
- Test yourself using simple questions
- Write questions using your knowledge maps and then answer them the next day
- Revision cards / flash cards with questions and answers

Exam technique: It is important you know how to answer each different type of exam question. The best way to ensure you can do this is to practise answering as many exam questions as possible.

- Use your textbooks, past exam papers, and any study resources which have been provided by your teachers. You may also be able to purchase revision guides.
- Make sure you allocate time within your revision plan to answering exam questions. Remember also to do these under timed conditions.
- Feel free to bring any examples in for your teachers to give you feedback on how you can improve. Also if you are stuck or aren't sure what to do please ask you teacher for help and further guidance.

Key Revision strategies:

1) Spaced Practice – space out your learning over time. Start planning early for exams, and set aside a little bit of time every day. Five hours spread out over two weeks is better than the same five hours all at once. After you review information from the most recent class, make sure to go back and study important older information to keep it fresh.


2) Retrieval Practice- Practice bringing information to mind without the help of materials. Recalling information without supporting materials helps us learn it much more effectively. Take as many knowledge quizzes or practice tests as you can get your hands on. You can also make flashcards to test yourself on key concepts, words or ideas

3) Elaboration – Explain and describe key ideas and concepts with many details. Make connections between different ideas to explain how they work together. Take two ideas and think of ways they are similar and different. Elaboration reinforces knowledge and retention of information

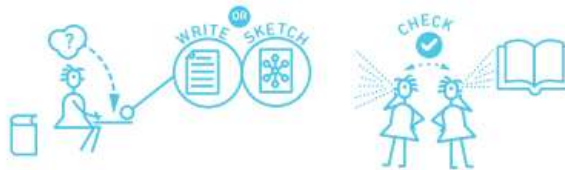
4) Interleaving – Switching between ideas and subjects when you study. Switch between ideas during a study session. Don't study one idea for too long. Go back over the ideas again in different orders to strengthen and consolidate your understanding.

5) Concrete Examples – Use specific examples to understand abstract and complex ideas. Link ideas to specific real-life examples as this will help reinforce your understanding.

6) Dual Coding – Combine words and visuals. Students will find it useful to represent ideas alongside drawings, tables, diagrams, timelines and pictures. These help students to remember and learn key concepts.

 **LEARN TO STUDY USING...**
Retrieval Practice
PRACTICE BRINGING INFORMATION TO MIND

Put away your class materials, and write or sketch everything you know. Be as thorough as possible. Then, check your class materials for accuracy and important points you missed.



Take as many practice tests as you can get your hands on. If you don't have ready-made tests, try making your own and trading with a friend who has done the same.



You can also make flashcards. Just make sure you practice recalling the information on them, and go beyond definitions by thinking of links between ideas.



HOLD ON!



Retrieval practice works best when you go back to check your class materials for accuracy afterward.



Retrieval is hard! If you're struggling, identify the things you've missed from your class materials, and work your way up to recalling it on your own with the class materials closed.



Don't only recall words and definitions. Make sure to recall main ideas, how things are related or different from one another, and new examples.

Looking After Yourself

We understand that preparing for exams can be a stressful and anxious time for students. It's perfectly natural. A little bit of stress can be a good thing as it motivates us to knuckle down and work hard. But exams can make stress levels get out of hand, which can stop us from performing to our best. So, it's important to address it and get it back under control.

Top tips:

- Learn to recognise when you're stressing out. Take a break or have a chat with someone who knows the pressure you're under. It will help to get things into perspective.

- Don't compare yourself to anyone else. Just do your best! Don't waste energy before the exams discussing how much revision you've done, or after the exam comparing how well you think it went. Clear your head and move on to the next one.
- Eat right. Treat yourself like a well-honed machine - eat fresh fruit and veg and have a proper breakfast. Fuel your brain as well as your body - no one can think straight on coffee and chocolate.
- Sleep well. Wind down before bed and don't revise under the duvet - your bed is a sanctuary, not a desk. Get your eight hours.
- Exercise. Nothing de-stresses the mind faster than physical activity, so build it into your timetable. Being a sloth makes our mind sloppy too.
- Panic is often triggered by hyperventilating (quick, shallow breaths). So if you feel yourself losing it during the exam, sit back for a moment and control your breathing. Deep breath in and out through the nose, counting to five each way.
- Remember this is a learning experience... all we ask is that you try your hardest and do your best.

Preparing for the exams themselves

Before your exams start:

Make sure you:

- Have a copy of your mock timetable
- Know which papers / units you will be examined on in each subject, each day
- Have all your equipment ready to bring in with you. (calculators, compass, protractor, pencils, pens...) Make sure you have a clear pencil case.
- Ensure your uniform is ready and you are smartly presented
- Have organised your revision resources so you can bring them in each day. You will have some time between exams and during Prep to revise. Make sure you spend your time wisely
- Spend time over the weekend consolidating revision and checking your understanding and honing your exam technique
- Get enough sleep, get some exercise and eat well

Exam equipment (You must have these)



Each day during mock week

Make sure you:

- Check your bag for equipment and make sure you have everything you need. Check your uniform before you leave the house
- Arrive on time – **DO NOT** be late and **DO NOT** be absent
- Know your seat number for each exam
- Use line up and registration to focus your mind and prepare yourself for the day. Don't let others distract you
- When requested line up in your exam rows in the cage. You **MUST** be in the correct order, in single file and in silence
- Answer your name for the register and remain in silence
- Get out only the equipment you need for the exam (clear pencil case)
- When instructed walk silently into the building and up to the 3rd floor
- Leave your bags in the changing rooms. (Ensure mobile phones are off and away in your bag- **DO NOT** bring them into the exam hall). Clear bottle of water only.
- Take a deep breath and enter the exam hall

In the exam hall

Make sure you:

- Locate your seat in silence (your picture card will be on the table)
- Place your pencil case and equipment on the desk and check you have everything you need
- Take **ALL watches off** your wrist and place these on your desk. **NO smart watches** must enter the exam hall
- Do not attempt to communicate with or distract other candidates
- Listen carefully to instructions and notices read out by the invigilators
- Check that you have the correct paper
- When instructed write your name and candidate details on the front

- Listen carefully to the time limit and think about how long you have for each question and the exam technique required
- When instructed turnover and start the exam paper
- READ the exam paper and think before you start writing. Make sure you are actually answering the question
- If you get stuck move on to the next question and come back
- Make sure you complete the whole paper
- If you have time at the end read through and double check your answers. Do not just sit there!!
- **Breaching any exam regulations will result in disqualification and your paper being graded a U. Please read the exam regulations and guidance booklet provided.**

At the end of the exam

Make sure you:

- Remain in silence (your exam may finish earlier than others)
- Check your name is on the front of the exam paper and any extra sheets are attached and named
- Follow the instructions of the invigilator. They will collect your paper
- When requested leave the exam hall in silence
- Quickly collect your belongings from the changing rooms and go to a study room or break / lunch. Remember the rest of the school is still working hard so transition respectfully and in silence
- Each day you may have time to revise (if your exam finishes early) or during Prep. You **MUST** bring your revision materials and make the most of your time.
- We will still be running corrections as normal during the mock week, so please make your way to the correct room if asked

Information and Advice for Parents

The secret to doing well in exams lies in planning and organisation. There are many ways in which you can help your child be ready for their exams:

- Ensure you have a printed copy of your child's exam / mock timetable. This will help you understand what they are doing, when and what will be expected of them. Display it in a very obvious place in your home so it can be constantly referred to.
- Help them plan out their revision schedule. However, remember that you are merely supporting them and that it is up to your child to outline their schedule. This will also give them the opportunity to take responsibility and learn to prioritise their work.
- Plan realistically. There are limits to how much work can effectively be done in a day, in order to be able to balance leisure and revision and be as productive as possible.
- Timing revision sessions. We recommend that pupils aim to revise a particular subject or topic for around 30 minutes in order for them to remain focused yet get enough time to go into a certain level of depth. Ideally, you would want your child to focus on a maximum of 3 subjects on a school night and 6 to 8 subjects during weekend days.
- Plan for breaks. Also remember that your child needs regular breaks or else they could become worn out, which would affect their productivity. Ideally, plan a short 5-10-minute break every one and half to two hours, longer ones for meal times.
- Agree the balance between work and social life and stick to the agreement. Again, flexibility is the key – if a special night comes up, agree that they can make up the work at a specified time.
- Even the best learning strategies become less effective when children are not getting enough sleep. Sleep is very important for consolidating what has been learned. Ensure pupils get plenty of sleep leading up to their exams. Sleep will make your child's spaced practice more beneficial. Gradually spacing revision out across the week and long before the exams start, rather than cramming it in right before tests, can help alleviate the need for pupils to stay up very late studying before tests.
- Establish a specific location to revise. Having a suitable study place is important. It should be somewhere your child can sit down and focus solely on their revision, concentrate and be productive. As far as possible it should be:
 - Somewhere quiet.
 - Somewhere with no distractions. Revising in their bedroom is often not the most productive alternative, due to the many distractions surrounding them. Ensure mobile phones and other electronic devices or consoles are removed to prevent interruption.
 - Separate from where they take their breaks. A study place should ideally only be for studying.
- Make sure your child has everything they need for their revision. Besides the usual school supplies, ensure they have the correct and up to date textbooks or revision materials for their subjects. Throughout the year, make sure your child keeps various handouts, worksheets, mock tests, and answer sheets provided to them by teachers.

Providing all-round support:

The best way to support your child during the stress of revision and exams is to make home life as calm and pleasant as possible. It helps if all members of the household are aware that your child may be under pressure and that people try to avoid putting extra strain on them.

Make sure there are plenty of healthy snacks in the fridge and try to provide good, nutritious food at regular intervals. Encourage your child to join family meals, even if it is a busy revision day - it is important to have a change of scene and get away from the books for a while. Also encourage your child to take regular exercise. A brisk walk around the block can help clear the mind before the next revision session.

It's important to get a good night's sleep before an exam, so discourage your child from staying up late to cram or spending large amounts of time on electronic devices in the evening. And make sure he or she eats a good breakfast on the morning of the exam.

Please encourage them to do well for his or her own sake. Explain that exams aren't an end in themselves but a gateway to the next stage of life - to A levels, university, college or work. Good results are themselves the best reward for hard work and will make your child proud of his or her achievements. Make sure your child knows you're interested in their work and that you'll be proud if they do well. Although bribery isn't advisable, it's fine to provide small treats by way of encouragement - perhaps a piece of cake or some biscuits after a chunk of revision has been completed. The end of exams can be celebrated with a treat that everyone can look forward to, such as a meal out or a family trip.

Key tasks for pupils on the day of exams

- Make sure you know your timetable; which exams are on and when you need to report into school
- Pack your bag the night before and ensure you have all the correct equipment you will need for the exam(s)
- Get to school early – catch the much earlier bus and ensure you are on time allowing some time to get your head together
- Allow time for your brain to wake up – have a shower, eat breakfast – take a healthy snack with you
- Do a final check of the subjects you will be doing that day – know the structure and how many sections there are
- Make sure you have EVERYTHING you need and take spares – do not get into the stress of asking teachers for things you should have brought
- Take a pen you feel comfortable writing with – take 2 just in case and any other equipment you need.

NHS Guidance: Helping Your Child Beat Exam Stress

Having someone to talk to about their work can help. Support from a parent, tutor or study buddy can help young people share their worries and keep things in perspective. Encourage your child to talk to a member of school staff who they feel is supportive. If you feel your child isn't coping, it may also be helpful for you to talk to their teachers at school. Try to involve your child as much as possible.

Make sure your child eats well

A balanced diet is vital for your child's health, and can help them to feel well during exam periods. Some parents find that too many high-fat, high-sugar and high-caffeine foods and drinks (such as cola, sweets, chocolate, burgers and chips) make their children hyperactive, irritable and moody. Where possible involve your child in shopping for food and encourage them to choose some healthy snacks.

Help your child get enough sleep

Good sleep will improve thinking and concentration. Most teenagers need between 8 and 10 hours' sleep a night. Learn more about how much sleep kids need. Allow half an hour or so for kids to wind down between studying, watching TV or using a computer and going to bed to help them get a good night's sleep. Cramming all night before an exam is usually a bad idea. Sleep will benefit your child far more than a few hours of panicky last-minute study.

Be flexible during exams

Be flexible around exam time. Staying calm yourself can help. Remember, exams don't last forever.

Help them to study

Make sure your child has somewhere comfortable to study. Ask them how you can best support them with their revision. Help them to come up with practical ideas that will help them revise, such as drawing up a revision schedule or getting hold of past papers for practice. To help with motivation, encourage your child to think about their goals in life and see how their revision and exams are related to them.

Talk about exam nerves

Remind your child that feeling anxious is normal. Nervousness is a natural reaction to exams. The key is to put these nerves to positive use. If anxiety seems to be getting in the way rather than helping, encourage your child to practise the sort of activities they will be doing on the day of the exam. This will help it feel less scary on the day. This may involve doing practice papers under exam conditions or seeing the exam hall beforehand. School staff should be able to help with this. Help your child to face their fears and see these activities through rather than escape or avoid them. Encourage them to think through what they do know and the time they have already put into studying to help them feel more confident.

Encourage exercise during exams

Exercise can help boost energy levels, clear the mind and relieve stress. It doesn't matter what it is - walking, cycling, swimming, football and dancing are all effective. Activities that involve other people can be particularly helpful.

More information can be found here:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/Pages/Coping-with-exam-stress.asp>