

Dear Parents, Carers and Year 10 Students

Moving into Year 11

As our current Year 11 students have left us following completion of their exams we look to our Year 10 students to step up into their new role as the most senior students outside of the 6th form. This status brings with it some privileges and also some responsibilities and expectations.

Year 10 Pre-Public Exams

Last week Year 10 students undertook “Pre-Public Examinations” (PPEs) in the majority of their subjects. These were formal mock exams used to give guidance to students, parents/carers and teachers about individual progress and to target support and guidance throughout Year 11. The majority of these exams have been conducted under full exam conditions, including the use of exam seating plans, full access arrangements, fully trained exam invigilators, and exam papers that the students will not have had any exposure to in advance. For many students this has been their first real experience of the exam environment and helps to get them used to the conditions and rigour related to this. This process also gives a good opportunity for students to identify strengths and weaknesses in subjects in advance of completing their full Exams in Year 11.

The results of these PPE exams have been shared formally in a results assembly on Tuesday 16th July. I handed the students a results sheet in the hall aiming to simulate the experience collecting their exam results for real; in addition the results have been published to parents/carers as a report via MCAS. Furthermore teachers in most subjects will be reviewing the marked exam papers with students in lessons both before and after the summer break.

This PPE process will be repeated during January in Year 11, where students will be able to get a real measure of their progress towards their final exams. Full details of this will be shared nearer the time. The results will be issued at the Year 11 Parents’ Evening on Wednesday 6th February.

Year 11 Uniform & Ties

As the most senior uniform wearing students in the school we look to Year 11 to set the tone for uniform. As such students not conforming to the expected standard should expect to be challenged and sanctioned where necessary. Confirmation about uniform expectations has been circulated to the whole school previously, however I would like to emphasise the basic requirements:

- correct trousers
- shirts tucked in
- correct school skirts worn to the correct length
- blazers being worn around the school without sleeves being rolled up.

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A marker of being in Year 11 is the entitlement to wear block colour ties, in line with their college colours. I am pleased to confirm that all of our current Year 10 students look fabulous in their new ties. If a student's tie is lost, then a replacement one can be purchased from the school at the usual price of £4.50. Students for whom the school receives pupil premium funding should contact Mr Heath for further details.

Year 11 Assemblies

Throughout the school year we run specific Year 11 assemblies that allow particular messages to be shared to this year group. Topics include preparation for exams, revision methods, careers information, 6th Form options, and also other opportunities from time to time. We have already started with these assemblies to start moving the student's mindset from Year 10 towards Year 11 expectations, with the intention that they can fully hit the ground running in September.

Year 11 Diner

The Diner is a social space reserved for Year 11 students use during break and lunch times. From the 9th July I have had the pleasure of allowing the current Year 10 students access to the Diner. There are a number of aspects in the Diner that have changed to provide students with a better experience. In the Diner during Break and Lunch students can access a wide range of food provided by our catering staff, can socialise with others in their year and will have the opportunity during the year to really make the space their own. In addition students are permitted to use mobile phones, log onto the Year 11 Wi-Fi, play music through the speaker or play table football. I should point out though that use of the Diner is regarded as a privilege and as such entry to the Diner will only be permitted with a clean planner with no more than 2 negative signatures.

Mistreatment or misbehaviour in the Diner itself, or elsewhere in the school can result in this privilege being withdrawn from selected students.

Year 11 Prom

A highlight for many Year 11 students is the Prom that celebrates the completion of their GCSE studies and the progression into the next stage of their education either through 6th Form, College or Apprenticeship routes.

The full details of the 2018 Prom have yet to be established, however in advance I would like to take this opportunity to emphasise that attendance to the Prom is a privilege. This is a prestigious event to give staff the opportunity to thank and commend Year 11 for all of their successes during their years at Stratford upon Avon School and as such, attendance is by invitation only.

In line with our most senior students setting a high standard and good example for other younger students in the school we set criteria for attendance at the Prom. Throughout their Year 11 students will be required to meet or exceed the following minimum expectations:

- An attendance record of 95% or above
- A strong punctuality record (no more than 5% late marks)
- An excellent behaviour record, meaning
 - No more than 5 after school detentions
 - No more than 50 negative Bromcom entries
 - No fixed term exclusions or internal full day isolations in the Behaviour Support Room (BSR)

I need to be clear that all Year 11 students start the year with the entitlement to a Prom ticket, regardless of their history during younger years; the final decision by the school will be made closer to the time.

Based on a review of prior data the vast majority of students will have no issues at all in meeting these criteria. These criteria represent the bare minimum expectations of any member of the school community and I would encourage all students to set their sights as high as possible. After all, a strong attendance, punctuality and behaviour record will support effective learning and ultimately success in final GCSEs, and good habits for life beyond school.

On the subject of setting sights as high as possible, in order to recognise those students who “go the extra mile” during Year 11 the School will reward the 10 students (5 boys and 5 girls) who achieve the highest combined attendance, positive effort and Blueprint scores across their Year 11 by paying for their Prom ticket in full.

Parents In Partnership

Our “Parents In Partnership” information evenings have been running successfully for the last three years and continue to receive excellent feedback from parents/carers and students. These sessions give our core Curriculum Leaders and other senior teachers the chance to share key information about exam structures, curriculum and course content, and also about ways that parents/carers can support their children through to success in this big exam year.

The real strength of these sessions has been sharing this information with both parents/carers and students at the same time, meaning that we can all pull together as a team towards exam success. Given the fantastic feedback we have received we will certainly plan to run these sessions again during the 2018-19 academic year. Dates have yet to be finalised however they will be publicised well in advance and I encourage you to look out for them in the school calendar and specific letters that will be issued in due course.

Year 11 Progress Leader

I am pleased to confirm that I will continue be the Progress Leader for your child next year. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with this cohort of very special students. I have had the pleasures of going on the Year 10 Scarborough Trip, the Celebratory Year 10 Cornwall Trip as well as a Year 10 reward trip to Warwick University for Employability UK. I have also seen the fantastic performances in DNA as well as various bands and performances from a number of Year 10 students. I truly feel that this cohort have the ability to be the best year group this school has ever seen and their recent PPE and current grade results certainly reflect this.

I look forward to the next academic year that starts on the 4th September. Thank you again for your on-going support and I wish you a fantastic summer.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Hill', written in a cursive style.

Mr J Hill
Year 11 Progress Leader