

Headteacher's Newsletter - 15th Nov 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been an excellent start to the year. Students have worked extremely hard from Year 7 to Year 13 to prepare for the examination weeks, which run this week and next. I have seen some impressive examples of revision notes and self-quizzing in the study centre and in lessons. Students across the year groups are really beginning to develop the self-study skills which will benefit them throughout school and especially in university and the world of work. Our focus on knowledge acquisition, however, is not just about rote learning of facts. Although factual knowledge is important, it is critical that it is underpinned by a deeper understanding of the subject. Last week, I delivered an assembly on this topic, encouraging students to use the evidence from neuroscientific research to make their revision more impactful. Some of the key messages were to space out revision to allow for forgetting. This makes the brain work harder to remember and this helps knowledge to be secured in our long term memory. Students should also make testing a part of each revision session. Parents and siblings can be a great support with this, testing your child on what they have been studying, even for ten minutes, has a powerful effect on knowledge retention and developing understanding. I also emphasised the need for breaks and good quality sleep. These are important for brain function but also for health and wellbeing. Our system is designed so that students don't have to suddenly commit all their subject knowledge to memory in Year 11 or Year 13, when they have to take public exams. Instead this process starts in Year 7 and allows students to steadily build the knowledge they need over five years. It is a much more effective and healthy approach to learning.

Before Christmas, you will receive your child's report via the DPR online app. This will inform you of how well they have met the key objectives for each subject they study as well as an overall test score. You can then use this information to target the areas your child is individually struggling with. Teachers will also use this information to plan for the two 're-teaching' weeks, where misconceptions and knowledge gaps that were evident in the assessments can be addressed. The INSET day on 9th December will be for teachers to analyse the assessment data for each child and plan the next stage of the curriculum in response to students' needs. This allows us to focus on developing students' depth of knowledge in a more precise and personalised way.

I am pleased to be able to tell you about a new initiative to reduce negative environmental impact at Haggerston. Your child may have told you about our recent student protest to raise awareness of the climate emergency. This coincided with the London-wide demonstration. Students and teachers designed banners and placards and created a sculpture out of plastic bottles to highlight the level of plastic pollution. Following this event, there is now a committee of young people, led by Ms Vale, who are looking at ideas to make the school more environmentally friendly. We have already successfully won a bid to install more water fountains around school and this will allow us to stop providing plastic water bottles in the canteen. Each child will be provided with a reusable bottle instead. This is just the beginning and the student committee have lots of other ideas in the pipeline, such as 'meat free Mondays' and smarter recycling schemes to reduce our environmental impact. We are also looking into a system to move our communication with parents fully online, rather than sending paper copies of

documentation. Many schools are already doing this so it makes good sense to explore it in more depth. I will update you when we have a clear plan around this and the wider environment initiative.

Finally, a plea about attendance and punctuality. We recently analysed the impact of attendance for the 2019 Year 11 cohort. Students who had above 98% attendance had a progress score of 1.1. This is equivalent to one grade higher in each of their subjects than a student with average attendance (e.g. 94%). When we push for good attendance and punctuality to school, it is because we know that it is one of the cornerstones for achievement and success. We still have far too many students arriving after 8.30am to school, missing part or all of their period 1 lesson. If your child is repeatedly late to school, you will be invited to a meeting to explore reasons and solutions. There are also a high number of requests to remove students from school for family travel. I'm sure that you understand why we cannot authorise such absences. Concerns about a child's attendance or punctuality are referred to our Education Welfare Service, Synergy. Please do let us know if you would like to discuss your child's individual circumstances, so that we can offer support at the earliest stage and minimise the negative impact on their education.

There are a number of events to look forward to in the run up to Christmas. I look forward to seeing many of you at our Christmas Production, 'Happiness is...' which runs from 3rd to 5th December and will, as always, showcase the talents of our amazing students.

Kind regards



Ciara Emmerson

Headteacher

Upcoming Dates for Your Diary:

Event	Date	Time
Head Teachers Coffee Morning	Wednesday 27th November 2019	9 - 10am
Parent meeting for Spain trip	Thursday 28th November 2019	5.30pm
Y11 Textiles Mock Exam	Friday 29th Nov & Monday 2nd Dec	All Day
Y13 Art Mock Exam	2nd and 3rd December 2019	All Day
School Production	3rd, 4th, 5th December 2019	7pm
Y8 HPV Immunisations	Thursday 5th December 2019	
Inset Day	Monday 9th December 2019	All Day
GCSE Art Mock Exam	10th and 11th December 2019	All Day
Character Day	Thursday 12th December 2019	All Day
Y10 and Y11 Berlin Trip	12th - 15th December 2019	Residential
Student Christmas Lunch	Wednesday 18th December 2019	Lunch Time
End of Autumn Term	Thursday 19th December 2019	Early Closure 12.45pm
Start of Spring Term	Monday 6th January 2020	8.30am

Parent Evening Dates - 5 - 7pm

Year 11	Tuesday 14th January 2020
6th Form	Tuesday 28th January 2020
Year 7	Tuesday 25th February 2020
Year 9	Tuesday 24th March 2020
Year 8	Tuesday 28th April 2020
Year 10	Tuesday 19th May 2020

Messages from the Senior Leadership Team:

<p>Behaviour & Safeguarding - Ms Moran</p> <p>Uniform - It is vitally important that all students adhere to our uniform policy. Please can I ask you to refer to page 19 in the school planner for guidance on this. As the temperatures drop students will need to be wearing winter clothing. All of this should be plain and black or navy in colour.</p> <p>Mental Health and well-being - The school website now has guidance for parents and students on important aspects of Mental Health and Well-being (within the Personal Development section). I recommend that everyone familiarises themselves with this so that you know what further guidance is available.</p>	<p>Curriculum - Mr Lynch</p> <p>The DPR subject objectives form the basis of the curriculum in lessons, homework and assessments at each DPR cycle.</p> <p>Students are developing their own self-study skills by learning their knowledge organisers which have been mapped against key subject content. Parents and carers are encouraged to engage with the online DPR app and also to check that students know the information in their knowledge organisers (E.g. through quizzing at home) Information about how to log in will be sent home after the first DPR cycle.</p>	<p>Sixth Form - Ms Harry</p> <p>Year 12 - Students have made a fantastic start to their Level 3 courses. Staff are reporting that the majority of Year 12 are coping well with change from KS4 to KS5.</p> <p>Year 13 - Mock exams begin on Monday. These are extremely important as they allow students and teachers to identify gaps in knowledge to ensure students are fully prepared for the Summer 2020 exam. Please continue to support your child's revision and preparation during this time.</p> <p>Attendance and punctuality remains a focus for Sixth Form as every lesson missed has a major impact on learning and progress. We ask for your support with this.</p>	<p>Inclusion - Ms Turbet</p> <p>The Inclusion department have been finalising Access Arrangements for students in KS4 & 5 for external exams. Access arrangements include extra time, readers and scribes and are used by students in schools across the country to ensure all students have a fair opportunity to do their best in exams. They are based on learning needs and not on academic ability. In the Y11 mocks, it's been great to see so many students making the most of these arrangements. Inclusion interventions have started this half term. Thank you to students for their positive engagement with these sessions.</p>
<p>Personal Development - Ms Lewis</p> <p>Enrichment: Electives for term 2 (Years 7 to 9) will be sent home in the next few weeks. Please take time to review with your child when received.</p> <p>Attendance:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Please try to keep medical appointments for after school as these taken in the school day decrease your child's attendance. 2) If your child is ill, please ring the school every day until your child returns. <p>Educational Visits: The majority of children had at least one educational visit last year. We are working hard to broaden your child's educational experiences this year.</p>	<p>Achievement & Exams - Mr Larini</p> <p>The behaviour and attitude of Year 11 students during the Mock exams has been exemplary. We are very proud of them.</p> <p>A minority of students were late to one or more exams. We would be grateful if parents can ensure that students arrive to school on time for the start of their mock exams.</p> <p>The assessment period will end on 22nd November. It is really important that all students continue to revise and attend intervention and revision sessions to be fully prepared for their assessments. Students must liaise with their subject teachers to ensure they are fully aware of the content and skills being assessed in each mock exam in order to effectively plan their revision.</p>	<p>Teaching & Learning - Ms Ray-Choudhuri</p> <p>We would ask parents to reflect on how your child's preparation for assessments went at home. Did your child make a revision timetable? Do you know how your child revised? Were they asking for your support with knowledge acquisition? If you need more information and support on helping your child prepare for exams we will be offering ideas and materials on our website before the next assessment cycle. You can also find details of the curriculum your child is studying. Knowledge organisers and blue books should be brought to school every day and can be used at home for independent study. All students are encouraged to self-quiz using these and have been taught the method in the study centre.</p>	