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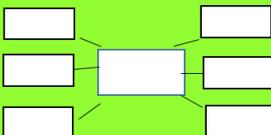
Dear Parent or Carer

If I start revising now, I will forget by the time of my exam!

It is now only 13 school weeks until the first examinations begin for year 13. In the week beginning 27th January students have mock examinations which will then be followed by a Year 13 parents' evening on Thursday 27th February.

It is important that students are preparing now for these examinations and have a robust revision/learning plan in place. Research has shown that constant practice and knowledge retrieval is the way to revise and the earlier that a student begins this process the more likely s/he is to remember. In devising a revision/learning plan, students need to make sure they are 'testing themselves' on knowledge that was learnt more than a week, month and sometimes a year ago. Testing is a valuable way of supporting your child through their studies. Students should have an effective set of flash cards that can be used at home in order to practise knowledge retrieval. STEP tutors have worked with students on how to make flash cards and also how to use them.

There are several strategies that staff actively encourage students to complete in their study periods and outside of school. The four main strategies are:

How to make my learning stick	
<p>Brain dump Write the name of a topic at the top of the page and write down everything you can remember about this topic. This could include diagrams, pictures, formulae, quotes, key names.</p> <p>Give yourself a time limit! (e.g. 4 mins)</p>   <p>When you have included as much as you can (from memory), then check your notes/knowledge organiser and add these on. Highlight those and focus on these next time.</p>	<p>We know that to move something into your long-term memory - so that you have REALLY learnt it, you need to practice and keep retrieving this knowledge. Here are 4 ways that you can do this.</p> <p>Flash cards Create your own flashcards. Question or key word on one side, answer/definition on the other.</p> <p>Rules of creating effective flashcards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Keep the answer brief and focussed. -Use visual images to help prompt the memory. -When using them to test yourself, give thinking time before turning over the card. -Keep revisiting the flashcards.  <p>You need to use these flashcards regularly - revisiting the ones you get wrong more frequently. Get someone to test you.</p>
<p>Look, Cover, Write, Check Using your knowledge organiser:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look at a section for 3 mins and try to memorise the information. - Cover over the knowledge organiser - Write down what you can remember on a blank sheet of paper - Check it against the knowledge organiser. What did you miss? - Repeat this process regularly and build this up until you can reproduce the whole knowledge organiser without looking. 	<p>Self-testing and quizzing Use multiple-choice questions to 'test yourself'. You can also use your flashcards for this.</p>  <p>You will get it wrong sometimes- this is not failure, this is part of the learning process. Stick with these methods and it will 'stick'!</p>

Students should be using the Look Cover Write Check method with knowledge organisers to revise knowledge and revisit information. A few days later, see what they can reproduce from the knowledge organiser - without looking. Two weeks later, try it again. A few days after that, try an exam question on this topic. Further information and videos on these techniques can be watched on the website: scientistrevision.com. Every student should be trying to complete these knowledge retrieval techniques for 2-3 hours per night. This includes recall practice and completing past papers.

To help with revision there are several revision sessions taking place throughout the week as well as subject support during STEP on a Thursday and Friday. In addition to these, students need to use their study periods effectively. Although many like to go home during these study periods we suggest the use of the library if students are likely to become distracted at home. Students are also very welcome to study in school beyond the end of the school day. They should also begin to reduce the number of hours they have in any part time job.

If students haven't already started, February half term is a great time to start revision as students have 9 days. In order to do this, students must have a revision timetable in place. Students have access to a Sixth form shared drive on office 365, which has revision resources and past papers in every subject area. Students need to practise using exam questions and should aim to complete weekly exam papers which are then handed in to teachers for feedback.

Our main goal is to ensure that all students fulfil their potential and feel fully supported in doing so. I understand that this can be a stressful time for students and to support them we will help students with strategies for managing anxiety and stress as well as developing study skills to ensure that they are able to revise and learn effectively. I appreciate your support with these issues and know that collectively we can ensure that students enter their exams as prepared and as confident as possible in order to achieve their future aspirations. I believe in all students in the Sixth Form and students should believe in themselves and that they can achieve their goals and future aspirations.

Finally, it is important to make you aware that exam boards have set a contingency date. This is an additional day at the end of the exam period. It will only be used in the event of major local or national disruption to summer 2020 exams, in which case it is possible that timetabled dates could be affected up to and including the contingency day. Schools have been asked to remind students that they will need to make sure that they are available **until 24 June 2020** for examinations.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely

Leeanne Mersh-Roberts
Head of Sixth Form