



Chenderit School

A VISUAL ARTS COLLEGE

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Dear Parents and Carers

In a few weeks' time, students in year 7 will be sitting their end-of-year exams, and as part of their preparation, they have been doing a unit of work during tutor time on exam preparation and revision. During some of the discussions in each tutor group it became clear to us that we could help parents support their child much more usefully if we sent home some key information and advice. Therefore, we have asked subject teachers for information about what exactly students will be tested on, and when the assessments will take place.

We have also compiled some advice that may be of help when discussing the tests: the comments and suggestions are offered to help you respond to any questions or concerns your child may have. We want everyone to make the best of the opportunities their schooling offers, and that includes learning to show themselves at their best in exam conditions.

We need to remind students that they have already had practice in key stage 2, and many displayed fabulous skills and attitudes when they did so.

In many ways, a good comparison to use with your child is that of athletes preparing for the Olympics, up to four years away. Athletes do not hope to succeed on the basis of last-minute cramming; they do not face their Olympic trials as "a chance to find out what I don't know" and the start of their journey. They realise that success starts early, with good habits and skills built up and consolidated over many hours of practice.

In subject lessons, teachers will give more subject-specific guidance, and in tutor time there are opportunities to discuss revision skills and how to manage time. Students will be given a copy of the table showing what the exams will cover in each subject. More detailed lists of topics to revise are set out on a separate attachment for maths and English.

We hope you find these comments of use, and welcome any questions or comments you might have to help amend our guidance for future reference.

Yours sincerely

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Preparing for end-of-year exams in years: a guide for parents

Schools have set end-of-year exams in different forms for many years, but with the changes to GCSE exam specifications they now have a much greater significance. Formal exams are now the largest part of GCSE assessment, including in subjects we might think of as generally practical, such as PE.

In the sections below I have set out answers to a number of questions you, or your children may have about the exams: I hope they will help you support them to make the most of the opportunity the tests present.

Why have end-of-year tests?

Experience tells us that it is not just knowledge of a particular subject that leads to GCSE exam success. Many other things have an impact: revision, time management, being able to read and respond to an exam paper, generally “exam technique”. It makes sense that if we want to get good at something, a sport, a performance, even a driving test, we practise in advance.

There are other reasons too: there is a great deal of recent research that shows regular testing helps us remember more. The effort that goes in to retrieving knowledge helps cement or reinforce that knowledge, making it easier to apply it in unfamiliar circumstances.

What should students revise?

I have asked subject staff to give a brief overview of what has been covered. Students should use their exercise books and other resources (for example websites) to refresh their memory.

How should students revise?

Sadly, right up to year 11 and beyond, a few students will still say, “I don’t know how to revise.” This is a shame, because teachers, parents and other sources such as BBC Bitesize or SAM learning will offer good advice. Often this is advice of a general nature: plan your revision; use “chunking” and work in time slots of around 40 minutes, with a break before the next; take exercise; sleep well.

What should students actually do when they revise?

Ideally, revision starts on day one of any course, and for many students it does. Keeping good notes, catching up on anything missed, checking understanding and re-reading are all things the most successful students begin early on.

As exams approach students should check and organise their notes: do they have everything they need? Students should check with the guidance they have received from the teacher: what will this test cover?

Then, systematically students should set about reviewing or revising

Is re-reading enough?

Re-reading is important. If you are studying a literature text, for example, it is vital.

For all other subjects, the best advice we can give is to make our revision active. The simplest method is one students will be familiar with: look, cover, write, check. This is the way many of us learn new spellings.

The same principle works equally in other subjects. I first remember reading this advice in the back of an old chemistry textbook: it is stunningly simple, but very effective. Take a topic you need to know about: write down the keyword on a blank piece of paper; write down everything you need to know about it. Then check with a good source – your notes, a textbook or reliable website.

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This principle works very well when you need to grasp a big idea. You can add detail, in the form of a mind-map.

If you need to learn details in a specific sequence, you may need a mnemonic: most of us remember the colours of the rainbow or planets in the solar system in this way.

Often we need to understand a process: here a diagram helps – and we should look, cover, draw and check.

If we need to learn a list of dates a timeline can be helpful, and understanding of how and why one things led to another can help when there is a clear sequence. Otherwise, we need to learn: look, cover, write, check.

Many students find reading and reciting aloud key ideas, phrases or definitions helps.

Self-testing is the key: we can learn to recall many things by writing a single point on flashcard, with a term on one side and a definition or example on the other. We can look at one side, and recall what is on the other.

How else can students practise?

In something like maths, practice papers, trying to apply knowledge in new situations is vital.

In other subjects, practising answering exam-style questions is of tremendous importance.

There are two important examination skills that develop with practice: reading the questions and applying knowledge in unfamiliar situations.

Most examinations test knowledge, skills and understanding.

In order to achieve, students need to know things – information, names, facts, dates, place, quotations. These need to be learned, as described here. They can be tested through recall activities.

Students also need to have acquired skills of reading, analysing, assessing, of carrying out calculations. These need to be practised, by carrying out longer answer problems.

Reading exam questions carefully, underlining keywords and asking yourself, “What do I know that is relevant here?” is a vital exam skill. This can be practised by looking at past papers or examples. Parents can help, when students are stuck, by asking questions like, “What have you done in the past that can help you with this?”

Understanding why things are important, how they link to other things we know is vital in making the most of our knowledge. If we understand how or why a scientific process happens, we are more likely to remember details of it, and be able to apply what we know appropriately.

Students can practise this skill by asking themselves big questions that involve assessing, evaluating or justifying. Questions such as, “What is the most important or significant reason or cause...?” draw on understanding.

Students should increasingly look for the prompts in questions that alert them: is this a *how* question or a *what* question?

Sometimes the best way to revise understanding is to create a mind-map, which allows students to see connections between different ideas.

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Is working with someone else effective?

It can be, for some people, as long as they are motivated to work; for some, the relaxed setting of working with a friend is a distraction.

Once again, the key is to make the revision active – setting questions, problems and challenges and checking their responses.

How should we deal with examination stress?

One of the reasons for having trial exams is to get used to working to time, so that the real exams are less unfamiliar.

As with anything, some students are far too relaxed, unwilling to commit the energy and effort needed to secure a good result. Others, often ambitious and hard-working students, feel under stress.

We all need to learn how to work with our stress; some psychologists recommend distraction, or positive self-talk. Last year a BBC documentary screened at exam time showed how you can manage the adrenalin that is a consequence of stress by telling ourselves that we are not afraid, but rather excited. Apparently, the physical feelings are the same: we can trick our bodies into thinking we are actually enjoying the experience. This has the effect of calming negative feelings.

And, of course, the familiar messages hold true: as long as we do our best, no one will complain.

But my son or daughter has said they have tried and cannot learn, or remember anything – what do I say to them?

Like anything, some of us find learning easier than others, but motivation has a massive effect. A number of students who find school subjects hard will learn to drive (both theory and practice) with no problem, because they are motivated to do so. I remember seeing a year 11 student, who apparently struggled to recall factual knowledge in his school subjects, displaying an encyclopaedic knowledge of the football grounds and managers of all the football league clubs. Had he been motivated to do so, he could equally have learnt names and details of all the elements in the Periodic Table!

As a parent, how can I help?

Support and encouragement is a key role, offering to explain, if we can, where there are difficulties; offering to test, using the flashcards the student has made; testing vocabulary; praising hard work and concentration.

K P Taylor May 2018

End of year exams Year 7 – what should students revise?

Subject	Exam date and time A side	Exam date and time B side	What will the exam consist of?	What should students revise?
Art	Week beginning 11 th June	Week beginning 11 th June	Students will complete a timed observational drawing during their art lesson.	Students can't really revise for a drawing exam- but by practising their observational drawing skills they will increase their chances of success. Students should remember to keep looking- to draw what they see, not what they know is there...
English	Wednesday 13 th period 1	Wednesday 13 th period 2	30 minutes reading 30 minutes writing	Key grammatical terminology; Dickens; writing to describe
Geography	7AGg1 Tuesday 12 th period 1 7AGg2 Tuesday 12 th period 3 7AGg3 Tuesday 12 th period 5	7BGg1 Thursday June 14 th period 4 7BGg2 Wednesday June 13 th period 4 7BGg3 Friday June 15 th period 5	Short data response style questions from a map, photograph or other resource One hour assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map skills (4 and 6 figure grid references, direction, scale and sketch maps) • Globalisation and the positive and negative impacts of TNCs • Weather and climate – types of rainfall, depressions, anticyclones
History	7A1 14 th June period 1 7A2 15 th June period 1 7A3 8 th June period 1	7B1 13 th June period 4 7B2 8 th June period 5 7B3 14 th June period 5	One hour exam, four questions: one on source inference, one on key features, one on consequences, one on importance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Battle of Hastings • Medieval life • The Black Death and Peasants Revolt • Henry VIII • Elizabeth I
Maths	Tuesday June 12 th Period 4	Tuesday June 12 th Period 1	One hour Exam. Non-calculator	Please see attached
Maths	Friday June 15 th Period 4	Friday June 15 th Period 2	One hour Exam. Calculator required	Please see attached

End of year exams Year 7 – what should students revise?

Modern Foreign Languages	Monday 11 th and Thursday 14 th June	7B1, 7B2, 7B3 Tuesday 19 th and Wednesday 20 th June	30 minutes of listening 30 minutes of reading and 30 - 40 minutes of writing	The basics: numbers up to 50, names, ages, birthdays, colours, school equipment, things you like and don't like, school subjects and opinions, describing your school and the school day, what you eat in school, telling the time, how you use technology, sports and hobbies, what you like and don't like doing.
Music	7A1 – Friday 15 th June period 5 7A2 – Wednesday 13 th June period 5 7A3 – Wednesday 13 th June period 2	7B1 – Wednesday 13 th June period 1 7B2 – Tuesday 12 th June period 2 7B3 – Friday 15 th June period 3	45 minute listening paper, based on the pieces analysed this year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sam Smith – ‘Writings on the Wall’ • Vivaldi – ‘Spring’ • Paul Simon – ‘Diamonds on the Soles of her shoes’ & ‘Homeless’ • Basic theory covered this year • Music history covered in homework tasks • Revision resources will be on Show My Homework
PE	Week beginning 11 th June Set online to be taken within the week, not in lesson time	Week beginning 11 th June Set online to be taken within then week, not in lesson time	Online (SMH) short answer / multi-choice questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components of fitness & when they are used – eg; speed, stamina • Basic anatomy – eg; major muscles & bones responsible for movement • Why we warm-up • Energy sources (from food) for activity

End of year exams Year 7 – what should students revise?

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thresholds of exercise • Benefits of exercise over time
Religious Studies	7A1 – Friday 8 th June 7A2 – Tuesday 5 th June 7A3 – Thursday 7 th June	Monday 4 th June (all B side classes)	One evaluation question asking students to consider the for and against of a statement and reach a justified conclusion	Festivals – why do Christians celebrate Christmas and why do Hindus celebrate Diwali Key beliefs and teachings in Christianity and Judaism
Science – Biology, Chemistry and Physics	Wednesday 13 th June – Lesson 4	Thursday 14 th June – Lesson 5	One-hour exam – Short structured questions and some longer questions requiring more detailed responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cells • Structure & function of body systems • Particles & their behaviour • Elements, atoms & compounds • Reactions • Light • Sound • Forces
Technology	7A Red, Orange, Yellow, Green groups -Wednesday 13 th June period 3 –and base test on Wednesday 20 th June period 3	7B Blue, Indigo, Violet, White groups - Monday 11 th June period 3 and base test on Monday 18 th June period 3	One hour exam – writing answers on the paper. One hour base test – multiple choice questions.	Electronics – circuit boards, resistors, electronic components. Food – hygiene, kitchen hazards, nutritional information. Product Design – workshop tools, workshop machinery, glues, edge finishing acrylic perspex, working in mdf.

End of year exams Year 7 – what should students revise?

				Textiles – symbols, machine stitches, safety rules, dyeing fabric. Designing a product – aesthetics, function and target market – specifications.
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Students will be completing end of year assessments over a period of lessons in computing.

Year 7 English end of year assessments – revision topics

Term	Explanation	Example
Alliteration	The repetition of a sound at the beginning of words that are next, or close, to one another. This can stress certain words and changes the rhythm of the sentence.	His soul swooned slowly. He was her father figure.
Metaphor	An image that is created by referring to something as something else. The author uses it to give the reader additional information to create a particular effect or to emphasise a point.	The army of ants was on a rampage. (The ants are being described as an army showing how many there are and that they are organized).
Onomatopoeia	A word that sounds like what it describes. It is used to appeal to the senses of the reader – often their sense of sound.	splash boom whack crash
Pathetic Fallacy	When the surroundings (e.g. the weather) reflect the mood of the character. Authors use this to create mood in their writing.	Rain began to pour outside as a single tear rolled down Emily’s cheek.
Personification	Making an object sound like a person by giving it human qualities. Personification is used to enable the reader to identify with what is being personified and helps to create a specific image.	The fingers of the tree grabbed my hair as I walked past. The flowers danced in the gentle breeze.
Rhyme	When the sound patterns of two words are the same – these sound patterns can be regular or irregular. The rhyme can adjust the tone of a poem or emphasise a point as with newspaper headlines.	I do not like green eggs and ham I do not like them, Sam I am . Time for the Red Sox to put Dice on Ice!
Rhythm	The beat of the writing when it is read aloud: fast or slow, regular or irregular. The rhythm of writing (poetry) can add to the overall effect of the piece.	“This is the night train, crossing the border” (The words create the rhythm of the train on its tracks.)
Simile	A comparison of one thing to another using the words ‘like’ or ‘as’. Similes provide the reader with additional information as well as to create a particular effect or to emphasise a point.	The man was as cold as ice. The pain was like a searing heat passing through her.
Symbol	A thing which is intended to represent or stand for something else.	Dumbo’s ‘magic’ feather which stands for courage and self-confidence.

Year 7 English end of year assessments – revision topics

Repetition	When something is said, or written, more than once. This can be consecutively or throughout a piece of writing. It is used to reinforce a point.	I'm nobody! Who are you? Are you nobody too?
Syllable	A syllable sounds like a beat in a word. They usually consist of one vowel and possibly one or more consonants.	Cat (1 syllable) Fairy (2 syllables) Hippopotamus 5 (syllables)
Synonym	This is when two different words have the same or similar meanings. (The opposite to antonym)	good – decent bad – awful nice – pleasant
Tone	This refers to the overall attitude of the writing and it is used to allow the emotions of the writer (or the character writing) to be expressed.	For example: formal / informal playful angry suspicious
Noun	Common nouns are the names of things, for example, people, places or objects.	horse school teapot
Proper noun	A proper noun is the name of a particular person, place or thing, and always begins with a capital letter.	Edward Middleton Cheney Monday
Pronoun	A pronoun is a word that takes the place of nouns.	he, she, it; his hers; them, their
Verb	A word used to describe an action or state.	run, laugh, be
Adjective	An adjective is a word that describes a noun (the name of a thing or a place).	tall, terrible, beautiful, loud
Adverb	A word that describes a verb or adjective.	quickly, quietly, very
Conjunction	A conjunction is a word that joins two sentences or clauses.	and, although, whenever, because
Simple sentence	A sentence consisting of only one clause.	I love English lessons.
Compound sentence	A compound sentence is formed when you join two main clauses with a connective.	I love English lessons and I like PE lessons.
Complex sentence	A complex sentence has a subordinate clause which relies on the main clause to make sense.	I first saw her in Paris, where I lived as a small child. I first saw her in Paris (main clause), where I lived as a small child (subordinate clause).

Year 7 maths end of year assessments – revision topics

Year 7 set 3 – test A (non-calculator)	Year 7 set 3 – test B (calculator)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictograms • Averages • Function machines • Factors, multiples and primes • Reading scales • Coordinates • Angles around a point/ straight line • Scatter graphs • Perimeter • Fractions, decimals, percentages • Properties of 2d shapes • Adding and subtracting decimals • Transformations • Converting measures • Substituting into a formula • Ratio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Averages • Indices • Simplifying expressions • Function machines • Expressions • Rounding • Line graphs • Factors and multiples • Ordering decimals • Measuring angles • Angles on a straight line • Area and Perimeter • Symmetry • Fractions to decimals • Percentages • Transformations
Year 7 set 2 – Test A (non-calculator)	Year 7 set 2 – Text B (Calculator)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bar charts • Factors • Fractions • Negative numbers • Averages • Percentages • Ordering decimals • Probability • Ratio • Area and perimeter • Simplifying expressions • Adding and subtracting decimals • Measuring angles • Converting measures • Angles on a line • Angles in a triangle • Sequences • Co-ordinates and mid-point • Transformations • Straight line graphs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Averages • Composite bar charts • Highest common factor, primes • Negative numbers • Money • Writing expressions • Area • Fractions • Coordinates • Rotational symmetry • Percentages • Transformations • Ratio • Sequences • Angles • Probability
Year 7 set 1 – Test A (Non-Calculator)	Year 7 set 1 – Test B (calculator)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bar charts • Ratio • 2-way tables • HCF/ LCM • Negative numbers • Averages • Estimating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scatter graphs • Averages • Midpoint of a line (using co-ordinates) • Pie charts • Using a calculator • Rounding to decimal places • Writing formulas

Year 7 maths end of year assessments – revision topics

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roots• Indices• Simplifying expressions• Expanding brackets• Substituting into a formula• Fractions• Angles on a straight line• Interior angles of polygons• Ordering decimals• Percentages to fractions• Solving equations• Converting measures• Area of 2d shapes• Surface area• Sequences | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fractions• Substituting into a formula• Simplifying expressions• Sequences• Angles in parallel lines• Ordering fractions/ decimals/ percentages• Angles in polygons/ quadrilaterals• Percentages• Trial and improvement• Best buys• Area of 2d shapes• Volume• Straight line graphs |
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