



Prepare to Perform Update What should you be doing now?

Issue 3 December 2023

“Don’t say you don’t have enough time. You have exactly the same amount of hours per day that were given to... Michelangelo, Mother Teresa, Leonardo Di Vinci... and Albert Einstein.” – H. Jackson Brown Jr.



December Message from Mrs Fearon

As the holidays approach it is certainly time for students, staff and parents to have a well-earned break and enjoy the excesses of the season. The students have worked incredibly hard this term on their practice exams and hopefully have gained more invaluable experience. I would again like to take this opportunity to thank you for all of your support with them. Practice exam results day is on Thursday 14th December and will run for the students as similarly as possible to results day in 2024. WAD 1 will also be issued at the same time. You will note that we are using the Behaviours for Learning for reporting, which may have resulted in the application grades being adjusted based on the practice exam performance. It is also inevitable that for every grade a student is happy with there may be some they are less pleased about. So in all of our conversations with year 11 it is important that they treat this as a springboard for their summer examinations, that is the time we want them to peak. Many of their results, although one grade or or more lower than target, will be an excellent foundation to work on over the next term. Every year students prove to us that with hard work and determination they can improve on their practice exam results by 2 or more grades. Students have continued to conduct themselves fantastically during the practice exam period and I know that self-reflection and improvement has been ongoing. Christmas will mark the last true holiday prior to the start of the GCSE period so it is important they plan to relax and enjoy themselves.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued hard work and support and wish you a very relaxing, safe and enjoyable Christmas and New Year.

Mix up their revision after the Practice Exams: Try these!

Virtual Stand and Deliver

Your son or daughter “virtually” with friends will be given a topic/theme/question by you. They then have 30 seconds each to write down as many answers as they can. Everyone will stand up and the quiz master (You) will call out names, they must not repeat any of the answers already given. How long can everyone stay in the game?



A Graphic Reminder

Think of each of the exam questions on the paper and draw a picture that reminds them of what they have to do in each one.

Revision Blackout

Design a poster with all of the key facts/formulas/examples for the topic. Swap with a partner. They will have two minutes to look at their poster, then turn it over and try to recreate it.



Virtual Remote Ping Pong via Google Meet / Zoom

Split into two groups: A and B. Group A will be given a series of questions and a time limit to answer them. Person A will answer first, but is **not** allowed to write anything down - they have to explain to person B how to do the question. After the time limit, they will swap roles. Finally, they will check each others' answers.

ESP (Extra support programme)

ESPs are in place to provide additional support that students might need in a subject. It is important they attend and ask any questions they have whilst at these sessions. ESP dates can be [found here](#).



Key Dates : Y11 Intervention Evening for invited parents

Monday 15th Jan

Year 11 Parents Evening 2: 21st March 2024

Easter Revision: 2nd April - 5th April 2024

Half Term Revision: 28th - 31st May 2024



Well Being Endurance Power to Perform Fitness Video:

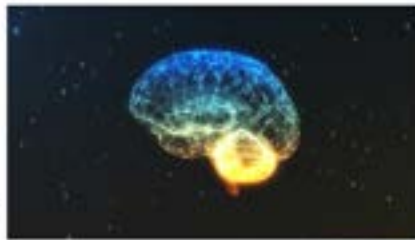
Why Fitness is so important <https://goo.gl/NmyoSY>

This Months Wildern fitness challenge <https://goo.gl/u1Yq1a>

The effects of physical activity on our brains

In the lead up to exams, and any stressful time in our lives, exercise is crucial for relieving stress and helping our minds and bodies to cope.

You may think that taking a short period away from your studies would be counter-intuitive, but it is proven to be of significant benefit.





Top 10 tips to support your child through their exams

Staying calm, feeling good, being effective

TOP TIP 3 to help your child control different aspects of their life to help them perform better when it comes to exam time next year.

3. Keeping Active

- Encourage them to keep active on a daily basis
- Carry out exercise in manageable chunks e.g. 3 x 20 min sessions throughout the day
- Plan to do active things together on a weekend
- Go out for a walk together and get some fresh air
- Help them plan out their weekly exercise schedule in advance
- After exercise your brain functions well, so encourage a revision session afterwards

60
minutes
per day



[Click here for the Wildern School Wellbeing Hub for further support](#)



Boost Brain Power with this easy to make snack
(Every little helps as they say)

PORK CHOP, SAGE ROASTED APPLES

PORK CHOP, SAGE AND OREGANO ROASTED APPLES, BUTTERNUT MASH, SPINACH. SERVES 4.

4 pork chops, 1 big one or two smaller ones, you decide
2 butternut squash, peeled and chopped into chunks, no seeds
50g butter
2 tablespoons of vegetable oil
3 good eating apples, maybe Pink Lady, Braeburn or Granny Smiths
1 bag baby spinach or other greens, washed and drained
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 tablespoon chopped sage leaves, you can use dried

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 190°C.

Heat a frying pan, toss the apples in the vegetable oil and fry the apples until golden, transfer them to a roasting dish.

Now brown the pork in the same pan 3 to 4 minutes on each side, before placing them on top of the apples in the baking dish. Sprinkle over the sage and oregano.

Put the pork and apples in the oven for 20 minutes, then remove from the oven and leave to rest for 5 to 6 minutes, while you cook the spinach in boiling water for 2 to 3 minutes.

Place all the chopped squash into a pan of salted water and boil until tender. Drain into a sieve or colander and leave for a few minutes to allow the squash to steam away any extra water. Mash the squash with the butter, adding salt and pepper to taste.

To serve: big dollop of mash, pork and apples on top and a little of the juices from the roasting dish, BAM!



EAT THIS DISH AND YOU WILL GAIN THESE BENEFITS:

Boosts memory recall, increases concentration levels, enhances immunity.

The best time to eat this dish: During revision for lunch or an evening meal.

Reason: Pork contains iron and potassium which can help with cognitive development. Butternut squash has potassium and high levels of Vitamin A to boost your immune function and help lower blood pressure. The Omega 3s in spinach will help brain function and increase your concentration levels. Apples, sage and oregano are an excellent combination for your mental wellbeing.

Please send photos of your Pork Chops to our school twitter @wildernschool or Instagram wildern_school

Exam Guidance for Students and Parents Summer Season 2024

It is the aim of Wildern School to make the examination experience as stress-free and successful as possible for all candidates. Hopefully, this booklet will prove informative and be helpful for you and your parents. Please read it carefully and show it to your parents so that they are also aware of the examination regulations and the procedures to follow in the event of any problems occurring. The awarding bodies (or examination boards) set down strict criteria which must be followed for the conduct of examinations and Wildern School is required to follow them precisely. You should therefore pay particular attention to the JCQ Information for Candidates and Warning Notices included at the end of this booklet. If there is anything you do not understand please ask. [Click here](#) to read more

Attendance

The impact of poor attendance on GCSE grades for Year 11 students this year at Wildern and across the country is stark.

Students who had an attendance of less than 80%, achieved **2 grades lower** in **EVERY** subject in the summer GCSE results in 2023 at Wildern compared to those who attended for over 96% of the time. Students who attended 80-89% of the time achieved **a whole grade lower** in **EVERY** subject!

Missing lessons means missing learning opportunities, valuable feedback from teachers as well as having to spend time catching up which can be challenging. If for any reason there is an unavoidable absence it is vital that your child discusses this with their teacher on return in order to catch up on essential missed content and skills.

As we move into the winter months, it is crucial for students to look after themselves to promote good health. This includes eating well, regular exercise and adopting good hygiene and sleeping habits. See the recipe on page 4 for some healthy eating ideas.

How to support revisiting of learning

Information for parents and carers

Did you know?



Remembering information is the first step for students in mastering higher level skills. For students to be able to explain, analyse, evaluate and create, they need to have a firm knowledge of the information and terms involved first.

Ebbinghaus' forgetting curve aims to show us how information can be lost from our memories over time when we don't strive to retain it. This forgetting curve suggests that we will halve our memory of new information in just days, unless we revisit learning to gradually move it into our long-term memory.

The more frequently that information is revisited and used, the more likely it is to move into longer term memories. Research shows that revisiting learning frequently is more effective than mass-revision. Unfortunately, many students report that they don't feel like it's working and they prefer larger and rarer chunks. Knowing this is useful for us, and the young people we care about, so we can talk about it and address this issue, even showing them typical forgetting curves and sharing examples of these.

What can you do?



As early as possible, encourage your child to make notes of the key information for topics they are studying. They may highlight these in a book/on a sheet, write them down onto flash cards, create a mindmap or record them in any other way that they wish. Colour-coding these can be a helpful tool in aiding revisiting as students can identify in green what they are confident with, orange what they are unsure they would remember long term, and code in red that information they didn't know until they wrote it down or don't fully understand and may need to explore further.

Encourage revisiting of topics frequently, using a home-learning schedule. Discuss with your child the need to revisit learning as they progress through units,

move onto next ones and come to the end of a term or year. Revision shouldn't be revising all the knowledge from the entire year; we should aim to revisit learning frequently to embed it into our long-term memories and then revise the higher skills using this knowledge as we go further into the course.

Encourage your child to find ways to address 'red' areas and weaknesses. This doesn't necessarily need to be seeking a teacher's help, it might be reading about it in a textbook, online or practising a particular skill. They may wish to use some of the resources PiXL have created as part of our Independence package to help them to consider areas of weakness and different ways they can address this.

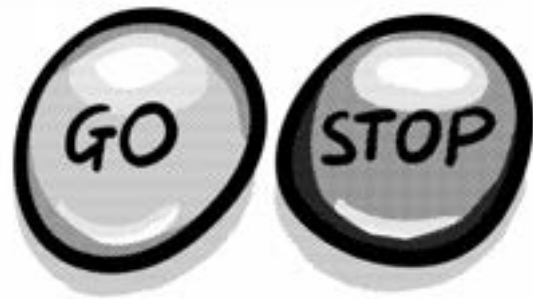
Did you know?



Experts in nutrition stress the importance of healthy diets for ensuring the most effective working of our brains. For example, although caffeine and sugar can provide bursts of energy, consuming these can lead to significant dips in focus and energy. We also know that easy swaps can lead to more balanced nutrition and energy levels, like using wholegrains, nuts and berries.

Having a tidy space can reduce stress and improve productivity. Another way to maximise opportunities for work and reduce distractions is to ensure the space is organised with everything needed for studying: laptop, books, pens and any other equipment. If you want to go a step further, plants are shown to not only create a calm space but also aid concentration.

Many people find approaches like the Pomodoro technique help to increase their levels of productivity as it allows for focused 'work' time for 25 minutes, and then a 5-minute reward break. It is often surprising how much we can actually achieve in short bursts of time when we are fully focused, with no distractions, and know that there is a clear end when we'll get to do something we want to.



What can you do?

Help your child to create a productive learning environment, a quiet space where they can work at a clear surface with as few distractions as possible. Encourage this to be a social media-free space.

Sit down with your child and offer to help them create a timetable of study. Work with them to map out the free time they could use to study and the free time that should be 'work-free' so they can do things they enjoy. Plan out the subjects and units they know they need to work on and schedule these into their 'work' slots. If your child is receptive to doing this together, it can help them to see that they aren't expected to use

all of their 'free' time to study, and that taking breaks and investing time in their hobbies and friends is important and valuable for them and their wellbeing. If possible, when your child is studying, bring them some snacks and a drink to help sustain them.

Encourage your child to prepare – either by themselves or with you – recipes from our Power to Perform recipe cards to ensure that they are eating brain-boosting foods. These recipes have been designed by an expert in the field to ensure that your child has brain-boosting foods and drink at their fingertips.

How to help develop reading and vocabulary

Information for parents and carers

Did you know?

Research shows that reading for pleasure has the most impact on the frequency at which young people read, their educational achievement and their personal development.



Renaissance Learning's report for 2018 showed that in primary school, children are generally reading books that are of a level exceeding their age and ability. Unfortunately, this changes at secondary school; children in Year 7 generally read books which are levelled at a year below their age and this gap either plateaus or continues to widen throughout the remainder of their time at secondary school.

Research has shown that as they grow older, children find reading less enjoyable and they also read less frequently. We also know from research that, in general, boys enjoy reading less than girls.

What can you do?



3 things to do if your child is at Key Stage 3:

Encourage your child to find texts they enjoy; choice and interest in reading is key. Spend some time at the library or a local book store and ask someone who works there to give suggestions based on your child's interests, films or books they've enjoyed or any new and popular books other children have enjoyed. Some research has shown that children who have books of their own enjoy reading more, but it is often worth ensuring that they're confident they'll enjoy the authors/texts they are choosing before investing!

Encourage your child to read for 15-30 minutes every day. This doesn't have to be novels - it could be short stories or even non-fiction. If your child is willing, sit with them and read together so that you can discuss and tease out some of the issues that crop up.

If your child has shown an interest in a recent issue in the news, or a particular topic at school, look into non-fiction articles or books related to it and help them see how they can follow their own interests and develop their knowledge of different areas they find engaging.

3 things to do if your child is at Key Stage 4:

By this age, young people can sometimes be harder to inspire in areas like reading. It can sometimes be worth

having a discussion about what your child dislikes, or finds difficult, about reading; be open-minded about their views and try to discuss ways around these together. It's fine to have dislikes, but what might they enjoy reading? Where could they make a start?

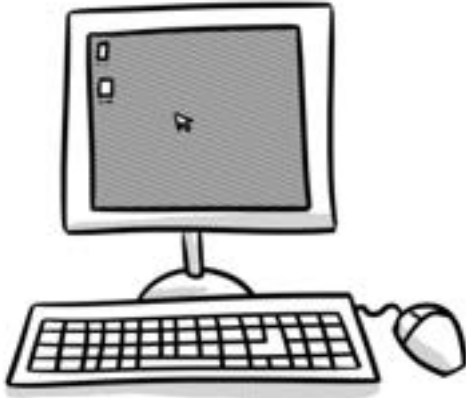
Encourage your child to find texts they enjoy; choice and interest in reading is key. This doesn't have to be fiction, it could be non-fiction extracts or whole texts too. You may find text ideas together, from your child's own selection or seek advice from their teachers at school. Due to the nature of GCSE English Language, you may find that your child's school library or English department have banks of fiction and non-fiction extracts for them to explore. This can help them, and you, to get a feel for what may interest them before widening your search to whole texts.

Consider, with your child, what subjects or topics they are particularly enjoying and seek out fiction and/or non-fiction linked to those. For example, some young people who like science enjoy biographies of well-known scientists from across the ages, those interested in history have a whole wealth of fiction and non-fiction available to them in their chosen areas of interest and those who enjoy maths may find books about topics like Alan Turing's Enigma machine of interest.

Screen Time

Information for parents and carers

Did you know?



Battles over screen time and devices have become a depressing part of family life. Recent research has revealed that it's not so much the length, but the nature of the screen time that matters. What is important is that whatever young people are watching, playing and reading is high-quality, age-appropriate and safe.

The University of Oxford examined 120,000 UK 15-year-olds in 2017 and found that among those teenagers who were the lightest tech-users, it was found that increasing the time spent using technology was linked to improved wellbeing - possibly because it was important for keeping up friendships. In contrast, among the heaviest users of technology, any increase in time was linked to lower levels of wellbeing.

Further research has shown that more than two hours of smartphone use on a weekday, and more than four hours on a weekend day, was linked to lower wellbeing. Several other studies suggest that higher levels of screen use in children and adolescents is associated with reduced physical activity, increased risk of depression, and lower wellbeing.

What can you do?



The British Psychological Society recommends that parents and carers use technology alongside children and engage them in discussions about media use. Help your child get into a screen-free bedtime routine. Screen time in the evening is especially bad for sleep patterns.

Set limits like no screens during meal times or no screens after a certain time. Suggest having one day a week with no screen time like Screen-Free Sundays. If they have a smartphone, encourage them to turn off as many notifications as possible and to turn on flight mode when they're with friends and family.

Encourage your child to do new physical activities

instead of screen-based inactivity. This could be new hobbies, going for a walk, playing sport, being creative or joining a youth group. Role model good behaviour by being mindful of your own screen time.

