

6 October 2017

Dear Parent

As you may be aware, the Science curriculum has changed and students are currently learning a new course which will be assessed for the first time in June 2018.

Your son will complete **six papers** in total and this will gain him 2 GCSEs for the combined Science:

2 for biology, 2 for chemistry and 2 for physics.

These will all be taken at the end of Year 11 in the summer exams.

Each paper is 1hr 15mins – 70 marks (16.7% of the GCSE).

As you can imagine, we are working hard with your son to enable him to achieve the best mark he possibly can, in each paper. But this effort will need to be a 3 way partnership between the school, your son and the support he gets at home.

We will be using different strategies to ensure that your son makes the maximum progress over the year and we feel that it is important that you are aware of them so that we can work together to give your son the support needed.

All students at this point are being entered for the foundation paper and the highest grade they can achieve will be a 5. To achieve a higher grade (6/7/8/9) they must take the higher paper but there first needs to be a commitment from your son, and a marked improvement in exam performance before we consider entering him for the higher papers.

Tassomai – This is an online programme that your son has been using in class but its biggest impact can be had when it is completed at home. Its purpose is to re-enforce the learning from the lessons and embed long term memory so that your son can perform better in his examinations. It is essential that your son completes his Tassomai tasks on a weekly basis so that he can keep on top of his progress. Failure to do so will result in your son spending time after school on a Tuesday until he has caught up. This will also be the time that your son can attend if he does not have access to a computer or the internet at home.

If your son is considering taking the higher paper he must stay on top of his Tassomai progress.

Master Class – Students will be invited to attend a master class every week for a term to push and challenge them to higher grades.

If your son is considering taking the higher paper he must attend these sessions without fail and, on each end of term assessment, achieve beyond his minimum threshold.

Minimum Threshold – Your son has a minimum threshold mark to achieve in his weekly assessments and his end of term assessments. This is based upon your son's progress to date. As a new GCSE we will not know until results day what the grade boundaries are going to be. Therefore we have worked with other schools to estimate a minimum threshold for your son to work beyond. This threshold will be given out to parents and students on October 17 Parent Science, maths and English Evening. (See below)

Failure to achieve the minimum threshold will result in your son being expected to attend an intervention session after school on a Tuesday evening from 3:05- 4:05. All the science staff will be available to help your son improve his knowledge and address any misconceptions in the learning so that he can be re-assessed and achieve his expected mark.

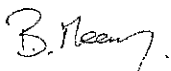
If your son is considering taking the higher paper he must exceed his minimum threshold on all of his assessments.

Science, Maths and English Parents Evening - There will be an evening on the 17 October in which you are all invited to attend. This is where you will get to know your son's science teacher, see how he is currently performing in assessments, what the staff are doing to support your son and some help and guidance as to how you can help him to prepare for his science exams. There will be resources available for you to take home that evening, therefore it is important you are able to attend. Further details will be shared with you shortly.

If your son is considering taking the higher paper your attendance is essential as relevant information and guidance about the higher paper will be shared during this evening.

As you can imagine, a lot of time and effort has been put into ensuring your son has the right opportunities to achieve his minimum threshold in his assessments, which will have a big impact upon him achieving his target grade in combined Science and your support is invaluable. With this in mind, can you please read, and sign the slip below outlining your support of our initiatives and our after school intervention so that your son knows that the school and home are working together to do the best for the student. This reply slip is to be given back to your sons Science teacher asap.

Kind regards



Mr B Meaney

Assistant head teacher – Science

Science

I will support the school and agree for my son _____ to attend any after school intervention sessions to ensure that he has all the help possible to achieve his minimum threshold in his Science assessments.

I will be encouraging my son on a weekly basis to complete his Tassimo tasks and I will be attending the science meeting on 17 October.

Print name _____ Signature _____