

Year 11 Newsletter – May 2023

Welcome to the May's Year 11 newsletter – you will be receiving this on day 63 of our 100-day plan; the countdown of the final 100 days for Year 11s at Bristol Metropolitan Academy. Of course, the focus of this newsletter will be the impending summer exam series which formally starts next Monday (15th May).

Exams:

Students will have already received a copy of their personalised exam timetable and all the exams can be found inside the 100-day plan document. Please read the sections below, covering exam expectations, pre-exam revision sessions and student well-being during the exam period.

Exam expectations:

Just to be sure that our expectations are clear, please see a list of expectations for all students before and during their formal GCSE exams. They are the same expectations that we have had for each of the mock windows but are worth revisiting. Many of these are JCQ guidelines, which all schools must follow, and risk penalty if they are not adhered to. Please do take the opportunity to discuss these expectations with your child before Monday.

- Uniform: students must attend all exams in full Bristol Met uniform. This includes blazer, tie and school shoes. Students will risk not being permitted to enter the exam hall if they do not have this on.
- Timings: published exam start times are when the exams start, and not when students should arrive/line up. Students who arrive late for exams may not be able to sit the exam if they arrive after the published start time.
- Line-up: students will be expected to line up outside the sports hall or assembly hall for their exams (depending on access arrangements). For whole year group exams, the line up is in house lines – with no exceptions to this. For smaller option subject exams, the line-up will likely be in class sets – this will be directed by myself, or the member of SLT on duty at the start of the exam.
- Entry to exam hall: students are not permitted to talk upon entering the exam hall.
- Electronic devices: these should be off and preferably not taken in to the exam hall at all. If they are taken in to the exam hall, they must be handed in to the invigilators upon entry. This includes any electronic devices, including smart watches.
- Toilets and drinks: students can bring a clear plastic bottle, without labels, into the exam hall with them. They should also use the toilets prior to lining up for the exams. For some exams, due to their length, students will not be permitted to leave to use the toilet. Using the toilet during the exam wastes precious time for the students.
- End of exams: even once papers have been collected, students should refrain from turning around or talking whilst still in the exam hall. There will likely be other students still completing exams.

'Toast-its':

Whilst the exams are taking place, students are still expected to attend their normal timetabled lessons. The only exception to this is in the time leading immediately up to an exam, where departments will be running 'toast-it' revision sessions. These sessions will be with their class teacher in the time leading up to the exam and will be an opportunity for a bit of last-minute revision, but more importantly, a nerve-settler and a confidence booster with the subject experts who have been teaching them the content. The times and locations of these pre-exam toast-it sessions will be published around the school, and to all staff and students to ensure attendance.

Student well-being:

Clearly the next few weeks will be extremely intense, and at points stressful for many of our students. As much as we advise the students to be revising daily for at least a couple of hours, it is important that they also build in down



HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS

time, and the opportunity to relax and decompress. Please see the following ways that you can help your child to follow the advice we have given them on how to look after themselves over the next six weeks:

- > **Keeping to their plan:** Students should have revision plans now so do ask to see them if you haven't already. Supporting them in sticking to these and ticking off the steps and achievements will help them be well-prepared but also give them reassurance of this.
- > **Food and hydration:** Encourage your child to fuel themselves properly by eating a sensible diet and drinking plenty of water too. This will give them the energy required and aid their concentration when revising and sitting exams.
- > **Sleep:** Ensure your child is getting enough sleep and promote the importance of being well-rested so they can study and work effectively. The quality of their revision is just as important as the amount, and they should still prioritise their sleep, aiming for around 9 hours of sleep each night.
- > **Rest and rewards:** Make sure they have built in rests to break up their revision into smaller chunks of time, and rewards to look forward to that are personalised in supporting their enjoyment and well-being. For example, they might take a break after every 45 minutes of study and gain a reward after ticking off a day's worth of tasks.
- > **Reach out:** If your child is really struggling, then reach out to the wider support network. We can help in school and encourage your child to talk with their friends and peers too.

While we are always here to listen and help, there are also many external sources of support for you as parents/carers, and your children during this time. One particularly useful source is this [Exam Stress Booklet](#) (please click the text for the link). It's produced by the Mental Health Support Team at Avon and Wiltshire NHS Trust and gives an overview of stress at exam time. It includes tools to help cope and signposts further places of support.

Leavers assembly, hoodies and prom:

The current plan for the leavers assembly is for it to be held on the morning of Friday 30th June. Students will be invited to come in through the assembly hall fire exits at 9:00am for a 9:15am start. They should be finished by around 10am and will exit through the same doors.

The digital link has gone out for you to order leavers hoodies for the class of '23. These links have been emailed directly to parent/carer email addresses and are only live until Tuesday 16th May. After this date you will not be able to order a hoodie. The entire hoodie process is hosted by an external company, and not the school. To this end, if there are any issues at all relating to hoodies, you must contact the company directly.

Prom is on the same day, Friday 30th June. Arrival is from 6:30pm for a 7:00pm start, at the Marriott Hotel on College Green. As a reminder, only students who have paid and have their name on the list/bring their ticket, will be permitted entry to the event. As part of the contract with the hotel, we will also have 3 security guards provided by an external security company, present at the event.

We know that exam results do not define students and are confident that all our Year 11s in the class of 2023 will go on to achieve great things. However, we also want them to have as much opportunity as possible when they leave us, and for their hard work to be recognised and rewarded in the summer. We really are at the final hurdle now, and so thank you in advance for helping us get your children through this period in their academic career.

Mr. A. Price
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