



Headteacher: Mrs L Ayling BA (Hons) NPQH

November 2017

Dear Parent / Carer

Further to the letter that I sent out at the start of the academic year, I would now like to share some key dates and information with you. You will find attached to this letter an overview of all the key dates for year 9, including Parental workshops which will cover a variety of issues pertinent to young people today, as well as the dates for Year 9 Progress Evening and the Pathways' Evening which will support you and your daughter with the important process of preparing for GCSE and vocational courses.

I have also attached an overview of all of the extra-curricular clubs available to year 9 students including clubs which run to support students with their home learning. Please do take time to discuss these opportunities available to your daughter and encourage her to try to attend at least one extra-curricular activity each week.

There is no doubt that at key assessment periods throughout the academic year, your daughter will find herself feeling that school and her school work become more challenging. Every step is taken to ensure that our students have a clear understanding of how to manage their work through their PSHE curriculum and the activities covered at key points during form period. I have included a list of strategies that may be of use to you to assist you in managing this at home.

If you have any concerns regarding any aspect of your daughter's education, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs L Hepke  
Year 9 Progress Leader

### **Year 9 Key Dates**

<b>Thursday 23 November 2017</b>	Progress Updates issued
<b>Wednesday 20 December 2017</b>	School closes for Christmas
<b>Monday 8 January 2018</b>	School opens – Spring Term
<b>Thursday 8 February 2018</b>	Pathways Evening 6pm-8pm
<b>Friday 16 February 2018</b>	School closes – Half Term
<b>Monday 26 February 2018</b>	School opens for Staff
<b>Tuesday 27 February 2018</b>	School opens for Students
<b>Thursday 1 March 2018</b>	Year 9 Futures Day
<b>Thursday 8 March 2018</b>	Parental Workshop Internet & Social media Safety 5:30-7:00pm
<b>Thursday 15 March 2018</b>	Year 9 Progress Evening 4:30-7:00pm
<b>Thursday 22 March 2018</b>	Year 9 Options Day Deadline for the return of Pathways forms
<b>Thursday 29 March 2018</b>	School closes for Spring Break
<b>Monday 16 April 2018</b>	School opens – Summer Term
<b>Saturday 28 April 2018</b>	DofE Practice Expedition departs
<b>Sunday 29 April 2018</b>	DofE Practice Expedition returns
<b>Monday 7 May 2018</b>	May Day Bank Holiday
<b>Saturday 19 May 2018</b>	DofE Qualifying Expedition departs
<b>Sunday 20 May 2018</b>	DofE Qualifying Expedition returns
<b>Friday 25 May 2018</b>	School closes – Half Term
<b>Monday 4 June 2018</b>	School opens
<b>Tuesday 5 June 2018</b>	Parental Workshop – Risk Taking Behaviours 5:30-7:00pm
<b>Friday 20 July 2018</b>	School closes for summer

## **Top Tips for Coping with Stress – A Parents' Guide to managing tests and assessments**

Tests and Assessments can be a challenging part of school life for both students and parents. At key assessment periods parents can get anxious about whether their daughters are studying and whether they are looking after themselves. Assessments can bring about additional stress for students, they can become anxious, irritable and can have trouble eating and sleeping. It is always worth planning ahead and preparing as well as you can and there are simple strategies that can really help:

### **1) Know the signs of stress:**

- Students experiencing stress may be irritable, not sleeping well, lose their appetite and appear very negative. Headaches and stomach aches can be stress related.
- Having someone to talk to about their work can help. Support from a parent, relation, family friend or teacher can help young people to air their worries and keep things in perspective.
- If you feel your daughter isn't coping, talk to her Progress Leader.

### **2) Ensure your daughter eats well:**

- A balanced diet is vital for your daughter's health and can help her to feel well during assessment periods.
- Try to discourage your daughter from consuming high-fat, high-sugar and high-caffeine food and drink as they can often affect mood and energy levels.
- Make sure your daughter eats healthy snacks and drinks plenty of water, to avoid dehydration.
- On the day of assessments, try to encourage them to eat something beforehand. It will keep energy levels up and aid concentration.

### **3) Encourage sleep:**

- Good sleep will improve thinking and concentration. Most teenagers need between eight and ten hours sleep per night.
- Encourage your daughter to turn off their gadgets and allow themselves half an hour or so to wind down to help her to get a good night's sleep.

### **4) Be flexible:**

- When your daughter is studying for assessments, don't worry about household jobs that are left undone or untidy bedrooms.
- Accept that this could be a stressful time for the whole family – expect outbursts and try to stay calm.
- Stay calm yourself – assessments don't last forever.

### **5) Help them to study:**

- Help your daughter to study by making sure she has somewhere to study.
- Help her to draw up a study schedule and then to stick to it.
- Encourage your daughter to have regular breaks to do something that they enjoy.
- Young people have different ways of revising – some may prefer peace and quiet whereas others will work more effectively surrounded by noise and family.

### **6) Discuss their nerves:**

- Remind your daughter that feeling nervous is normal, this is a natural reaction to stressful situations.
- Encourage your daughter to talk to you and be honest about how she is feeling.
- If your daughter is anxious, reassure her that she has done her best for now and any problems can be dealt with in the future.

### **7) Encourage exercise:**

- Make sure your daughter is active. Exercise boosts energy levels, clears the mind and relieves stress. Walking, cycling, swimming, football and dancing are all effective.
- Exercise is also a good way to relax.

**8) Make time for treats:**

- Try and plan something for your daughter to look forward to.
- Reward her for trying her best, however she feels it went.

**9) Be aware of the negative side of social networking:**

- Teenagers spend an average of 31 hours a week online; this has been proven to have a negative impact upon the progress they make in school.
- Young people are claiming to be sleep deprived due to how much time they are spending online.

For more information:

- [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/helping\\_with\\_exams](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/helping_with_exams)
- [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)