



9th January 2026

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to update you about forthcoming events to support you and your child with making decisions about which GCSE subjects to study. Students were given an outline of all this information in assembly this morning.

Firstly, on the 2nd and 3rd February, Year 9 students will have formal assessments in their core subjects (English, Maths and Science) which will take place in the sports hall under exam conditions. This is to give students an early and non-pressured experience of taking exams so that when it comes to the GCSE exams, it will feel familiar and less stressful.

Year 9 students will also sit exams in their non-core subjects from 2nd - 13th February, which will take place during their usual timetabled lessons. A copy of the assessment timetable is shown below. All these assessment marks will be reported home to you before the Easter holiday.

Please can you support us by checking that they have the correct equipment in their pencil cases for assessments: a pen, pencil, rubber, ruler, calculator, compass and protractor will be required.

Secondly, coming up after these assessments will be the **GCSE Options Fair**. The results from these assessments will give you and your child an indication of how they are getting on. There is no requirement to reach a certain mark to take a GCSE, but inevitably students will want to know where they are most successful and factor this into their choices. Choices should be made primarily on what they like doing and their career ambitions.

When we send you the assessment results, we will also send you all the information about the Options Fair, but you might like to make a note of the date after school on **Thursday 23rd April**. You will have a chance to talk to staff about all the different GCSE courses on offer and talk to current students taking those courses as well. The Options Form will open on that day for one week for you and your child to make your choices.

Tutors will be supporting students through the assessments and the options process. In addition, they will be giving out the useful information below about good study techniques to start developing now. There will also be information from departments about the content covered in each of their exams on Satchel One. Preparation is also a good way to avoid stress, so we are encouraging students to do some revision for these assessments, again in order to practice the skills they will need for their GCSEs and to get into good habits. Students should be doing no more than an hour a night on this revision so encouraging them to do short stints of good quality thinking is far more important and effective than hours of re-reading their notes. Below are some tips to help you support them in this revision.

Supporting your child at home – five top tips

1. Your child's study space

Depending on the space available in your home, you could consider creating a special area where your child can focus on their studies in peace and quiet. If this isn't an option, investigate accessing this at a local library.

If you want to make their bedroom into this quiet space, make sure it is rid of the many distractions that may be in there. Experts have found that an untidy workspace can be detrimental to the study process, so it's a great excuse to keep the area neat. But don't be too harsh on your teen if it gets a little messy as that won't help with any exam stress.

2. Making a revision timetable

Please encourage your child to make a revision timetable.

As well as adding in the assessment dates themselves, students should allocate time to revise the content for each subject. Some subjects may need more study time than others. It's helpful if the timetable is broken down into 25-minute Pomodoros.

Any timetable worth its salt will include breaks and treats! Brains and bodies need a rest - this will actually help to absorb all that information and rewards are a great way to create targets to work to.

3. Pomodoro technique

[The Pomodoro Technique](#) is one of the most popular and effective time management methods out there, and many people use it every day to make sure that they manage their time well when they are working or studying.

The Pomodoro Technique focuses on organizing your time into intervals. It involves using a timer to structure a study session. The aim is for your child to work for 25 minutes before taking a short break of around 5 minutes. They then work for another 25 minutes before taking another break.

4. Using flash cards

[Flashcards](#) are small, double-sided cards that emphasise key information. They usually mention the topic/question on one side and important details, keywords, mnemonics, etc., on the other. This helps the brain make better connections between those two pieces of information.

Most children who use flashcards try to fit in too much information on them. A revision card is supposed to be a bite-sized factoid that your child's brain can digest and remember with ease. Once your child has made their flash cards, see if they will let you test them.

5. Useful websites

[BBC Bitesize](#) is one of the best revision sites. It has hundreds of resources, including numerous online revision guides, lessons, and interactive platforms.

[Quizlet](#) uses AI features. This website allows you to [make flashcards](#) to help students learn difficult concepts in the most efficient and memorable way possible, it's one of the best revision resources available.

Hopefully all this information is useful in planning the coming weeks. We will be in touch again shortly with more detailed information about the Options Process.

Best wishes

Dr Sylvia Bettington (Assistant Headteacher) and Mrs Dawson (Head of Year 9)

Y9 February 2026 Assessment Schedule (English, Maths and Science are in the Sports Hall, with remaining subject assessments in lessons)

Please use the class codes, e.g. 9X2, from your child's timetable (copy on Satchel One) to determine when their assessments will be.

Art - Students will be creating a piece of work in lessons during 3rd - 13th Feb based on their prior learning

Week B						No exams P1-4 due to DofE over the w/e	Week A					
	Mon 2nd	Tues 3rd	Wed 4th	Thurs 5th	Fri 6th			Mon 9th	Tues 10th	Wed 11th	Thurs 12th	Fri 13th
P1				Hist 9Y1 RS 9Y3			P1	Food 9X3 Music 9Y3 Hist 9Y2 Drama 9Y1		Music 9Y1 Geography 9X3 Drama 9X1 RS 9X2	Food 9Y1	
P2	Science (ALL)	English (ALL)		CS 9X1 Hist 9X2	Music 9Y1		P2		PE 9X	Food 9X1 DT 9X2 DT 9X4 Music 9X3 Geography 9Y2	Geography 9Y3 RS 9Y2	
Break							Break					
P3	Maths (ALL)		CS 9Y3				P3	PE 9Y	Food 9Y3 DT 9Y4 Hist 9X1 Drama 9X3		Music 9X2 Geography 9X1 & 9X2	
P4					DT 9Y1 DT 9Y3 Food 9Y2		P4	RS 9X3	Languages 9X Drama 9Y3		DT 9X1 Food 9X2 DT 9X3 Languages 9Y	
Lunch							Lunch					
P5	Music 9X1 DT 9Y2 CS 9X3		RS 9X1	Food 9X4	CS 9Y1 & 9Y2		P5	Food 9Y4 Drama 9X2		CS 9X2 Hist 9Y3	Geography 9Y1 Hist 9X3 Drama 9Y2 RS 9Y1	