

15th May 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Clarification on attendance for Year 11 students during the examination season

GCSE examinations started on Monday and the vast majority of students I have spoken to have seemed confident on how they have performed. As I am sure you are aware the next few weeks are crucial for your son/daughter. Staff at Helsby High School are working extremely hard to ensure your son/daughter is as prepared as they can be for the examinations in their subject, along with providing general support and guidance to do with examinations.

Over the past week students have sat examinations in RS, ICT, Science and French. Most students have conducted themselves in an excellent manner during the examinations and have been a credit to the school and their parents.

I am sure you are aware, we communicated with students and wrote to parents prior to the start of GCSE examinations to explain the procedures for Year 11. We, along with all other schools, are required to ensure Year 11 students are in school up until the end of their last examination. The government removed any entitlement to 'Study Leave' for Year 11 and the ability for students to be recorded as 'Study Leave' many years ago and as such expects all students to be present in school, when they are not participating in an examination.

We understand the pressure your son/daughter and you may be under at this time and it is a fine balance between following the expectations set out by the government and being sympathetic to individual requests. Research has shown that students who attend school during the examination period perform better than those who do not attend. This is certainly true for those subjects that appear near the end of the examination season.

In order to support your son/daughter, the English department will be holding an extra revision session on Monday 1st June at 11.20am in the examination hall in preparation for the English Language examination on the morning of Tuesday 2nd June. The Maths department will be holding extra revision sessions on Wednesday 3rd June at 11.20am, Thursday 4th June at 2.05pm and Friday 5th June at 9am. We would strongly advise that your son/daughter attends these sessions.

Subject teachers will be present in all timetabled Year 11 lessons and if students have sat the examination for that subject, teachers will allow your son/daughter to revise – under their supervision. If your son/daughter has any concerns about this they should speak to a member of staff immediately. For safeguarding reasons the school continues to have a responsibility for your son/daughter and we thank you for your support in ensuring they attend lessons when not in exams.

I hope you understand the reasons for this letter and are able to continue to provide support for the school. If your son/daughter or you are unsure of the arrangements at this time please do not hesitate to contact the school via the usual methods.

Yours sincerely



Mr J A Cooney
Key Stage 4 Leader