



# THE ECCLESBOURNE SCHOOL

*'Learning Together For The Future'*

Head Teacher  
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27<sup>th</sup> March 2025

## **Supporting Year 11 Students in the Lead-Up to GCSE Exams**

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the summer examination season approaches, we are incredibly proud of the hard work, focus, and ambition shown by our Year 11 students. This final stretch is crucial, and with the right structure, support, and mindset, every student can take confident steps towards achieving their goals. At The Ecclesbourne School we are committed to ensuring that every student is fully prepared—academically, emotionally, and physically—for the demands of their GCSEs. With this in mind, we would like to offer some guidance on how we and you as parents can support your child during this critical period.

### **A Quiet, Distraction-Free Space for Study**

A calm, organised space helps students focus. Where possible, support your child in identifying a quiet area at home where they can revise without interruptions. This space should be free from distractions such as mobile phones and TV, and equipped with essential resources: pens, paper, highlighters, and a clear surface to work on. During home study leave they can always come into school and make use of the Library and Supervised Silent Study areas.

### **Help Structure Their Time with a Realistic Revision Schedule**

Encourage your child to create a structured revision timetable that covers all subjects, allowing time for breaks, physical activity, meals, and rest. Students should work in focused bursts (45 minutes or so is a good length of time for most), followed by short breaks. Sticking to a routine promotes consistency, reduces anxiety, and builds confidence.

### **Balance is Key: Rest, Relaxation and Sleep**

While hard work is vital, rest is just as important. Students who are well-rested and mentally refreshed will retain information better and perform more effectively in exams. We recommend:

- At least 8 hours of sleep per night
- Time in the evening to relax (e.g., family meals, TV, catching up with friends, listening to music, or a short walk)
- Avoiding screens close to bedtime

### **Healthy Diet and Regular Exercise**

Energy levels and concentration are directly affected by lifestyle. A balanced diet—rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein—will help your child stay focused and alert. Encourage regular exercise, even short walks or stretches, to support both physical health and mental wellbeing.

### Managing the Stress of Exam Season

GCSEs can be a source of anxiety. Your child will really benefit from talking to you, although they won't always make that obvious! It's important to ask them how they are feeling, listen, and reassure them that it's okay to feel overwhelmed sometimes. Remind them that progress matters more than perfection, and that doing their best is what counts. If they are experiencing high levels of stress, let us know. Our pastoral team, peer mentors and wellbeing support staff are here to help.

### Make Use of School Resources

Your child has access to:

- Tailored revision materials provided in class and online
- After-school and Home Study Leave revision sessions
- Revision Zone and online learning platforms
- Past Papers - We strongly encourage students to use past papers, mark schemes and teacher feedback to guide their revision and links to all exam boards are on the school website Examinations page.

### Attendance and Punctuality Matter

In the weeks leading up to the exams, every lesson counts. Please support your child in maintaining full attendance and arriving on time: every session provides essential knowledge and guidance.

### Key Exam Dates and Information

We have shared the exam timetable with students, and a copy is available on our website. Please help your child to familiarise themselves with the schedule, including room locations and start times. It helps to print a copy out and put it on the fridge door where all the family can see it. Pay especial attention to which exams are in the morning and which in the afternoon as it can be easy to make a mistake.

### Home Study Leave Revision Sessions

From **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025**, students may begin **Home Study Leave**, where this has been requested and approved by parents and carers. For many students, this can be a valuable opportunity to revise independently in preparation for their upcoming exams. However, we remain fully committed to supporting all students throughout the exam period. As such, the School will continue to offer **supervised silent study spaces on site** for any Year 11 student who wishes to revise in a structured and quiet environment. In addition, we will be running a series of **subject-specific revision sessions and structured support opportunities** throughout the examination period. These are open to all students, whether they are on Home Study Leave or attending school daily. A full timetable of these sessions is on the Examinations page on our website [External Examinations | Ecclesbourne School](#), and all the resources mentioned above are found on the Student Portal which your child can access via their laptops.

Please note that during study leave, students will be **formally registered for attendance at each examination**. If students attend school at other times—for revision sessions or independent study—they must **sign in and out at Reception** using their lanyard cards. This is to ensure we always maintain a safe and secure environment. For some students, based on their progress and individual learning needs, it is beneficial to continue attending school full-time during the examination period. If this applies to your child, you will have been contacted directly by a member of our pastoral team. Engagement with after-school support has been taken into consideration

when deciding on eligibility for Home Study Leave, and families will be informed of the final decision in the week commencing **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2025**.

This is a challenging time, but also a moment of great opportunity. With strong routines, support at home, and a focus on both academic preparation and wellbeing, our students can approach the summer exams with calm confidence. We are here every step of the way. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's tutor or Head of Year.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J McNamara', written in a cursive style.

James McNamara

Head Teacher