

THE LEIGH ACADEMY



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Principal: Julia Collins

9th September 2020

KBR/JSN/Yr 11 Standards

Dear Parent/Carer

RE: Year 11 Achieving Success

As we commence the second week back for Year 11, I would like to take the opportunity to update you with some curriculum information and how we plan to support your child through this academic year. However, I would like to make an initial point that nearly all of the cohort have returned with a fantastic attitude and seem ready to fully immerse themselves in the various challenges that Year 11 brings. At this time of year, we would normally be inviting you into school to meet with us, unfortunately due to current restrictions this is not yet possible. I hope however, that this letter gives you a flavour of the year ahead. I am very excited about the next 12 months and the prospect of working in collaboration with you and your child to achieve the best GCSE results possible.

Standards and Expectations:

As per the recent communication by letter from Mrs Collins and I, the basic expectations of students for the fundamental elements of education haven't changed. Punctuality, attendance, equipment, uniform and behaviour are all aspects of school life which should be as close to impeccable as possible. While this has also been very impressive on the whole I do need to draw your attention to two issues:

1. **Nails.** There should be no nail varnish or acrylic nails on display at all. A few students haven't got this right so far and that needs to be fixed over the weekend please.
2. **Blazers.** We have a few too many students arriving without them and this is part of the academy uniform. I am aware that there is a delay on some products with our uniform supplier and if this is the case, then please do put a note in your child's planner explaining the situation.

Curriculum:

Following the lockdown and enforced time away from face-to-face education we have made the decision to withdraw the DIT (Digital Information Technology) course from the Year 11 curriculum. This course was timetabled to just one lesson a fortnight on the old timetable structure, and the amount of coursework and exam preparation required following the lockdown is too high to make it feasible. The sensible decision is to allow students to spend more time on their other subjects, catching up on the content they need to cover. This lesson has been given the title of 'Online Learning' on their timetable as they can use this extra hour to access Google Classroom tasks set by their teachers.

The majority of Year 11 students continue to follow 4 option subjects but as we have moved to a one-week timetable this has also created another 'Online Learning' session. We therefore



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have the opportunity for the good independent learning habits developed by students over the past few months can be used during the school day too. This will help prepare them effectively, should we find ourselves in another lockdown situation at some point over the next few months (let's hope not!).

Practical subjects will continue to be classroom based for the immediate future, but lessons such as Art and Engineering will need use of subject specific materials through the year and we will adapt the rooming to suit this when necessary. Tutor time for Year 11 is a 30-minute learning and support period at the end of the day. Every Year 11 student has a tutor who is a specialist in one of the subjects your child is studying and can therefore provide an extra level of academic intervention, as well as still being another element of pastoral support. These tutor groups could be adjusted as the year progresses, depending on the subject specific support each child will benefit most from.

A final curriculum note is to remind you that all Year 11 students have PE lessons scheduled on a Tuesday. Students should therefore arrive in their academy PE kit and will stay in their kit for the duration of the day, although they still should be fully equipped as normal for their 4 other classroom-based lessons that day. The changing rooms will not be used other than being a place to store their bags while they participate in the lesson.

Module 1 Assessments

A two-week period of baseline assessments will be taking place for Year 11 from **Monday 28th September 2020 - Friday 9th October 2020**. These assessments will all take place in the classroom and will be no longer than 55 minutes each, although some subjects will use more than one lesson for assessments. An exact schedule will be shared with you and the students by **Friday 18th September 2020**. These assessments will provide a clearer picture of the depth of knowledge and understanding your child has across all of their subjects, and help teachers shape the content of their lessons over the ensuing period to help fill gaps in knowledge of work already covered. Teachers will give students guidance on how to prepare for these assessments and details of the course specification areas they will be assessing over the next few lessons.

Many students in Year 11 have examination 'access arrangements' i.e. they are entitled to additional support through assessments. Mrs Butler will be in touch with you to confirm how your child will be supported through the assessment period in due course. It is important we create the conditions for every child to do their best despite the restrictions we have in place, and we will endeavour to do exactly that.

Careers Support

While GCSEs and equivalent courses are clearly the main focus for Year 11, there also needs to be consideration now for life beyond the examinations. In September 2021, your child will most likely be following one of the following 4 pathways:

1. Post 16 at The Leigh Academy
2. Post 16 at another establishment
3. College
4. Apprenticeship

We will be putting a programme of support in place to help you and your child decide the route they would like to take, and Mr Williams will be leading on this. However, as with

most other things, there will need to be an adapted approach to the way we have done this in previous years, due to the restrictions on external visitors and information evenings etc. Once we have clarified the exact nature of the careers support we can provide, we will be in touch with you to ensure you are fully informed of the actions we are taking and resources we are providing to help with these crucial decisions and choices.

Chromebooks

I am very pleased to inform you that we are planning to provide every Year 11 student with a chromebook to support them through Year 11. These chromebooks will be owned by Leigh Academies Trust, but students will be able to take them home and importantly, the expectation is they bring them to school every day to support their learning. When the summer exams are completed, the chromebooks will need to be returned. Details on how the chromebooks can be collected will be shared with you once they have arrived with us - hopefully before the end of Module 1.

Parent - Teacher Day

Parental involvement in Year 11 is vital and I will be making plans to ensure you are kept informed of your child's progress as much as possible. Again, we will be reviewing over the next few weeks how we can manage parent - teacher consultations within the health and safety guidelines and I will be in touch before the end of September with how I propose to manage this on a Module by Module basis. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me at kevin.brewer@leighacademy.org.uk should you have any questions at all about your child's education or Year 11 in general.

Key Contacts:

Mr K Brewer: email kevin.brewer@leighacademy.org.uk

Mr M Williams: email michael.williams@leighacademy.org.uk

Ms J Grimwade email jessica.grimwade@leighacademy.org.uk

Year 11 admin – Mrs Sandra Cockle -direct phone no 01322 620511.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully



Mr K Brewer

Head of College with responsibility for Year 11