

Shimna Integrated College

What to Do for to Help?

The subjects everybody studies:

English - helpful extras are to encourage reading. It may sound daft, but reading junkmail and discussing how it tries to grab your attention would be great preparation for Paper 1. Get into the habit. Also, encourage reading at least one article a week from a Sunday newspaper magazine: music review; car review; feature; food review; problem page; whatever takes your daughter/son's fancy. Encourage proof reading for accuracy everything your daughter/son writes. Spelling and sentences really matter. Recognise that preparation homeworks before controlled assessments are crucial to your daughter/son's final grade.

Languages/UBELT - the key to success is planning ahead for coursework and assessments as well as revising for exams. Read the copy of the assessment date and task guide, which the teacher will provide. Help with: keeping notes well organised and up to date; reading teacher comments on marked work; completing all homeworks; learning vocabulary and testing it; ensuring the student is present on the timetabled day of assessment; ensuring research is ready for assessments.

Science - check that all homeworks are completed. These are usually questions in the science booklets. Encourage your daughter/son to use their revision guide, science booklet and class notes to revise, then to make brief revision notes. Help them check that they can recall their notes. Download past papers from the science website. Get your daughter/son to self-mark using the mark schemes and then write out revision notes for the things they got wrong. There are not many past papers, so persuade them to do them again and again until they get full marks in each. Provide computer time, so they can use revision websites linked from the science dept website eg Bitesize. Ask them to explain science to you.

Maths - encourage using www.mymaths.co.uk and BBC Bitesize. Make sure that all equipment is at the ready: scientific calculator; pen; pencil; ruler; rubber; protractor; compass. Check that every homework is complete. They all add up. Check the presentation of maths work. Showing all working out and thought processes is really, really important. Remind the student about the maths club after school on Wednesdays from 3.30pm. Always encourage your daughter/son to ask if s/he is stuck.



Priorities

Eat Well
Get lots of sleep
Be good to yourself,
mind and body!

Part Time Work

Part time work is great
experience, and you need to
keep it in proportion.
Ease off for exam time.

Get started early and
always always ask if you
get stuck!

How to help with GCSE

Check in frequently about what your daughter/son is up to in class.

GCSE makes complicated demands on students, and it is important that as parents/guardians you know how to help if you are to maximise your support for your daughter/son. We have prepared this leaflet to share our experience of what helps students achieve their best.

Coursework and Controlled Conditions Assessments

This is one of the most important elements of GCSE. Students do sit very important examinations at the end of their courses, but they also sit coursework and Controlled Conditions Assessments throughout the course. These assessments contribute a large proportion of the marks which will produce your daughter/son's grade, and it is essential that s/he works to her/his very highest standard in every assessment as well as in the final examination.

Here is how you can help -

Attendance

It is essential that a student is present for every single class. Controlled conditions assessments are sat during normal class, and they take several classes to complete. If a student misses any of the sessions, with the best will in the world, it is almost impossible to find time to make up. Once the assessment is over, the class needs to move on. Parent/guardian support in achieving full attendance is invaluable.

Homework

At GCSE level students do have homework every night. Each student has a homework diary, and by year 11 and 12, most students are using their diary very well to record all their homework and deadlines. It is really helpful if you are in the habit of asking your daughter/son to talk you through what has to be done, and to show you how the diary is looking.

In the **weeks** leading up to a Controlled Conditions Assessment, homework is likely to include research, planning and practice. It is essential that this homework is completed by the deadline so that the student is ready to do her/his best on the days of assessment. It is very important that students, and you as parent/guardian, know

that teachers are not permitted to offer any further help to students once the Controlled Conditions have started.

In the **days** leading up to a Controlled Conditions Assessment, a student's homework is likely to be learning and/or preparation drafting. Students find this kind of homework difficult to get down to. You can help by offering to test knowledge, read over notes, listen to your daughter/son explain what they plan to do in the assessment.

Timing

An important element of GCSE is that students will, in many subjects, be sitting Controlled Conditions Assessments which are taken over a number of days. For example, English Controlled Conditions Assessments can be five hours long, and are taken, an hour at a time, over five English lessons.

Some Controlled Conditions Assessments are performance based, such as language orals, PE moderations, giving presentations. It is essential that each student is prepared, ready and present on the right day at the right time with all their equipment, notes, knowledge and ideas ready. Parents can be a huge help here. Encourage your daughter/son to use their diary to write in when every assessment will happen, so that you can help them get the preparation and timing right.

Nerves and Confidence

There is no doubt that your daughter/son will feel under pressure at times. Some students are more nervous when they have to sit a four hour written task, and some when they have to get up and speak, play or perform. However, in every subject, thorough preparation will have been done in class, and plenty of advice and materials supplied to help with preparation that needs to be done as homework. Nerves aren't always a bad thing. A bit of adrenalin can help you raise your game and do your very best. As long as the preparation is done, everything will go smoothly.

Keeping Track

Teachers will encourage students to keep track of assessments successfully completed. You can help here with a treat and lots of encouragement.

Evening Study

Evening study is available to senior students, Monday-Thursday until 8.00pm.