



CROOKHORN COLLEGE

Year 11 Parents/ Carers' Key information- please read

Dear Parents/Carers

Year 11 so far

Year 11 have had a very positive start to the year to date and I feel they are really beginning to embrace the ethos of the College Cornerstones and engage with OPEN MIND through their increased commitment to their learning both in and out of class. We have had record attendance at our supported study club so far with an average of 30 students a night turning up to complete revision or retrieval tasks in preparation for their first set of mock exams in November. This is an excellent habit that many students are forming now, and for those who have not started after half term would be a good time to get involved with this. There are further details later in this letter.

Going forward

I am fully aware that this year is as stressful for parents (I know- I have a son in Year 11 myself) as it is for the students and what I want to do now is lay out what we can do jointly as parents and professionals to support your child during the course of this year, so we can jointly ensure that it is as successful as it can be.

Attendance

There are many simple steps you can take as parents that will support your child. The first and most important one is around attendance. Below I have included a table that outlines the difference regular attendance can make to a student's grades.

Attendance band	Average grade per subject	Target
95+%	5.25	4.46
90-95%	4.76	4.47
85-89%	4.09	4.64
Below 85%	3.30	4.16

This data has been taken directly from the GCSE results achieved by our Year 11 students last year. What this data basically tells us is that if a student attends College 95%+ then they will achieve an average grade of a 5. A grade 5 is now termed the 'good pass' by the government.

Regular attendance is not just about grades though, it is about building resilience and habits for life. If the students are coming in every day, they will be making the most of the support and opportunities available within the College. The experts who can help guide them through the next tricky few months and on through their transition to post 16 education, are here in College and we are in the privileged position where all this support can once again be offered face to face which, after a period of such significant disruption, is vital.

Ultimately, by encouraging your child to come in every day, you are strengthening this partnership, as we are able to do what we do best, which is to facilitate the very best outcomes for your child and the very best route through the next stage of their education on towards their careers.

This commitment on both our parts is transformational!



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Support in the Autumn Term

Mock Interview Day

Next week we are running our mock interview day which has been so important to the development of our students and their confidence in the past. The Careers team have organised for a number of local employers and further education colleges to come to the Crookhorn to run interviews for all students so they can practice their interview skills, and get formative feedback on the quality of their CV' and how they present during the course of the interview. As parents, you can help support us with this day by ensuring that your child first of all attends and secondly is dressed smartly so as to make a good first impression in their interview. Finally, talking positively with your child about how beneficial the practice is and what a difference it will make when they go for their first job interview will also really help. We had a number of students last year alone, who went on to secure apprenticeships as a result of the practice they got through this opportunity.

If your child is nervous or anxious about doing the interview, please do not worry. Over the years we have helped coax and encourage many an anxious child through the process and when they have completed the interview their sense of self worth is just incredible. If you wish to alert us prior to the day that your child is showing signs of anxiety in relation to the interview then call and let us know or e mail into the admin box, (admin@crookhorn.hants.sch.uk) and we will make sure we start a very gentle early preparation process to ease the stress all round.

We always share our pictures of the day on FaceBook and it is a really proud moment when we all see how grown up the students look.

Parent Information Evening for Post 16 transition.

Like you, I am going through the process of taking my son round to different Colleges to see what courses he might be interested in post 16. I work in education, and I find the information quite overwhelming at times, and so to help you, we have arranged for a Post 16 Options Information Evening for all Year 11 parents on **Wednesday 2nd November** hosted here at Crookhorn. **This evening will start at 5:30pm and finish by 6:15pm.**

There will be a presentation about the different courses and qualifications available and a chance to ask questions; all we need you to do, is attend. You can come with or without your child, the main purpose of the evening is to give you information, so you can have those all-important conversations with your child at home and support them with attending the various Open Evenings for all the different Further Education Colleges.

Mock Examinations

I know not many students would see mock exams as a form of support, but the whole aim of completing these exams is to give the students practice. When we talk about OPEN MIND, one of the key factors is learning through mistakes and this is the purpose of mock exams. We want the students to make the mistakes in the practice, so they can learn from them and then be ready and confident for the final exams in the summer. These first mock exams begin in the week commencing **14th November** and focus on the core subjects of English, maths and science.

The English exams will take the supportive approach of being guided. This means that Mr Bezant and Miss Robertson will be in each exam and will talk the students through the questions and then the timings for planning and writing up their answers, as well as time for a read through and amendments. This is to help the students grasp the all-important skill of time management in the longer papers. All mock exams will have the full support in place according to the access to exam requirements for students with specific needs.

Other subjects will run a set of assessments based in the classroom rather than in of the examination rooms. The feedback that the students get from these exams and assessments from their teachers is absolutely key in the preparation for the next set of mock exams in February and



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then the final exams. Students will also receive a “predicted grade” per subject and this will assist students when entering grades for their Post-16 applications.

Parents Evenings:

During the second half of Autumn term, we will be holding another parents’ evenings for you to attend. This one is on the 1st of December and will be held in person at the College. Year 11 will have the priority for the core subjects of English, maths and science and teachers will be able to give detailed feedback on the performance of your child in the November mocks and what the next steps are to help prepare them for the February mocks and then the final exams. These conversations are designed to be supportive and encouraging. I am fully aware of how overwhelming these types of evenings can be for parents, but what we want to do is to be able to share with you what is going well and what the next steps are to help build the confidence and ‘can do’ attitude. Once again, I am asking for your part of the partnership, which is to book appointments and attend.

If you are concerned about how to book appointments online or how to access the appointments virtually, please don’t worry. If you contact us any time between now and a week before the parents’ evening and tell us who you want any appointment with, (and this can be with foundation subjects as well) then we will book the appointments for you.

Support in the Spring Term

Parent Information Evening- How can I help my Child?

From past experience of speaking to many Year 11 parents, we as a College are aware of how parents often feel almost helpless in knowing how to support their child through the preparation for the exams and then through the exams themselves. So, we would like to invite you to our Parents’ Information Evening on **Wednesday 11th of January**. **This evening runs from 5.30 pm – 6:30 pm** and it is titled: *“How can I help my child?”*

Crookhorn staff will share some simple strategies aimed at supporting students with revision and stress management and I promise you it does not require you to have any knowledge of the material they are learning for the exams.

Parents Evenings

In the Spring term we have two further parents’ evenings for you to be able to attend. The first one will be on the 18th of January and will be virtual. The focus for this parents’ evening is for Year 11 core subjects again and if you are concerned about accessing your appointments virtually, let us know and we can talk you through how to access the appointments using your phone. I find virtual appointments for my two sons a real help as trying to get to a parents’ evening when you work full time can be incredibly hard and stressful.

The second parents’ evening will be held on the **8th of March** and this will be in person at the College. Year 11 have the priority for all subjects on this evening. For both evenings the same offer of support for booking the appointments stands as above.

The focus of the second evening will be on the feedback from the February mock exams and again teachers will be going through what has gone well and what the final preparation steps are, before the GCSE exams start in May.

February mock exams

I have talked extensively above about the purpose of having mock exams. This final set of mocks starts on the week beginning the 30th January and will run for two weeks as all subjects will have exams to be sat in the variety of examination venues on the College site.

Ongoing support throughout the year.

After College study sessions



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We have been working really hard over the last few months to help students understand the benefits of Study Club. We are aware that when many students go home, they get distracted by the need for a snack, their social media, possibly their X-box, possibly YouTube or TikTok. Let's face it, the distractions for youngsters today are indeed endless.

If students stay in College to go to Study Club, their snack can be easily sorted by going to the canteen which we now have open at the end of the day for grab and go snacks. They can then head to Study Club and even if they just do 30-40 minutes of extra focussed study, completing the week-by-week revision guides that all subjects have in place now, this will make a huge difference to their confidence with regards to the knowledge required for each of their subjects.

To help encourage students to understand the importance of this independent study, we have made it clear to them that they will need to have attended over 30 study club sessions during the course of the academic year, (starting from roll over in July), to be able to apply for prom tickets. Lunch time study club sessions also count in this total.

The Study Club sessions are always staffed. The lunch time ones are run by the specialist staff holding the club for that subject. The after-College study club sessions are run by study support staff on Monday and Tuesday and then English teachers on a Wednesday, science teachers on a Thursday and maths and technology teachers on a Friday.

Your support in encouraging your child to attend these sessions would be greatly appreciated and should also help relax the home dynamic as you will know that they have stayed at College to complete their independent study, so there is no need to be asking them to constantly get on with their homework or week by week revisions guides when they get home.

Week by week revision guides

Every subject has published on 'itslearning' their week-by-week revision guide. This provides a structure for students to organise their revision schedule, so they feel confident in the run up to the exams. If you are unsure where to find this, please do speak to your child and ask to see this on 'itslearning'. If you there are any problems, get in touch with either the class teacher or through the admin e-mail as soon as possible. You will find contact details for all our staff on our website and the admin e-mail address was included earlier on in the letter.

Holiday sessions

During February half term certain subjects will be providing students with the opportunity to come in for some in- depth revision support. During the Easter holidays and May half term other subjects will be offering the same opportunity. These sessions are run in a relaxed way, and just help provide the students with additional support to increase their confidence in subject knowledge and skills prior to the final GCSE exams. To help with your planning as a family we will be sending out a full timetable of these sessions in the coming weeks.

Support Websites

On our website you will find a list of all the exam boards for each subject in the exam section and some links to approved revision guides.

(<https://www.crookhorn.hants.sch.uk/page/?title=Exam+Information+and+Results&pid=28>). You will also find timetables for the upcoming exams in November and the summer.

We have been using the online platform Seneca Learning in College and they have a useful free parent platform to keep track of your child's progress. This lets you check in on their recent activity, overall study time and preview any homework assignments teachers have set them (and if they're overdue!!)



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Here are some instructions for getting started:

1. [Click here to create a parent account](#) (if you arrive at a login page, make sure to click on the 'Sign up' option)
2. Click 'See your child's scores'
3. Copy and share the unique link with your child (or you can use the e-mail or Whatsapp buttons)
4. Ask them to open the link on their phone or laptop (whatever device they typically use Seneca with)
5. Once they've successfully opened the link they'll see a linked confirmation 
6. Refresh the page on your parent account to review their progress.

If you have any issues, you can find a video guide [here](#).

To add a second or third child tap the "add another child" button - and repeat steps 3-6 above. We also recommend GCSE bitesize <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/levels/z98jmp3> which can be used by students to help them with their revision.

All of this can be used alongside itslearning, where all the specific revision for each week can be found.

Mental health support

We are acutely aware of our need to support student well-being and mental health throughout their Year 11 time. Below are just some of the strands of our action plan that we are implementing and if you have any thoughts or questions, please do send an e-mail into our admin box with the subtitle of 'Year 11 student well-being' which will be passed onto our mental health team.

- 'Promoting Positive Mental Health' page on 'itslearning'
- Regular GO WEST focus during fortnightly mentoring sessions with Tutors
- Breaktime drop-ins with Miss Cromey (Mon/Tues/Thu/Fri)
- A wide range of extra-curricular sports clubs available throughout the week
- Tips and guidance on creating revision schedules and planning for upcoming exams during Tutor Time
- Support for dealing with exam stress during PSHE lessons in the Spring Term

Summary

In summary, this year is all about the quality of our joint partnership for the benefit of the students. I hope that the support outlined here reassures you of what we are currently doing, what we plan to do and the reasons why we do it. I also hope that you feel you can partake positively in the partnership by ensuring your child's attendance to College everyday and also your attendance to key events like parent's evenings.

If you have any concerns about any part of your child's education in Year 11, please do not hesitate to get in contact with us via the admin e-mail

Thank you for your support

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Bennett

Headteacher



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Summary of Important Dates:

Parents / Carers Evenings:

13th October	Year 11 Core subjects (preparing for mocks)
1st December	Year 11 all subjects (results from mocks, next steps)
18th January	Year 11 Core (Preparing for February mocks)
8th March	Year 11 all subjects (Feedback from mocks and next steps)

Parent Support Evenings:

2nd of November	Post 16 Information evening (5.30 - 6.30 in the Main Hall)
11th January	How can I help my Child? (5.30-6.30 in the Main Hall)

Exams:

W/C 14th November 2022	Mock 1
W/C 30th January 2023	Mock 2
W/C 15th May 2023	(Provisional date) GCSE Exams begin
Last examination date to be 30 th of June (Provisional)	

Prom: Friday 16th July