NEW GCSE GRADE

The times they are a-changing… just when we thought that education couldn’t see much more change this summer will see the first year of GCSE grade changes for our Year 11 students. Back in 1988 when GCSEs were first introduced I remember being one of those guinea pigs taking the new qualifications, and I suspect that the Year 11s sitting their GCSE English and maths this summer may feel as apprehensive as we did all those years ago. Why apprehension? Well, of course because change always brings a degree of apprehension. The grades which students will achieve will be different: 9-1 instead of A*-G, and the content on which they are being tested is different too; in maths for the first time students will be sitting three papers instead of two – so they will definitely feel the change! For your information this is how the grades will compare to one another, and immediately you can see that the message is that the top grade will be more challenging to achieve than ever before:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New GCSE grade</th>
<th>Old GCSE Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>B/C</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>F/G</td>
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</tbody>
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How we prepare ourselves to teach our students has been an important aspect of trying to alleviate some of these tensions. Teacher training is an important aspect of this, ensuring that our teachers know and are planning well for the new syllabus, where there will be emphasis on different aspects of the courses. Moderation is also something which you will hear us discussing endlessly! Why? Well, moderation helps to ensure that our judgement of student performance is in line with the judgement made in other schools, and of course made by the exam board. In essence we want to check that our knowledge of what makes a piece of student work a ‘9’ is the same as another teacher, and is the same as the exam board. There would be nothing worse than giving students feedback that they are on track to achieve a particular grade, when in actual fact we are off track because we have not kept abreast of the work of other schools and the exam boards themselves. And so we train, and we meet, and we discuss, endlessly.

This week we met with other English teachers from the regional E-ACT group of schools to once again share our knowledge of what constitutes which grade. We are privileged to have such high quality leadership and teaching in both English and maths, and their dedication to making sure that our Year 11 students are on track to achieve their target grades is appreciated in classrooms across Shenley every day.

All of our Year 11 students should now be well into their long term revision programmes for this summer – it’s never too early to start, but they can at least commence their final push for those grades safe in the knowledge that our teachers are preparing just as hard, and will be giving them those top tips right to the last moment in the classroom!

Mrs L Monk, Principal
Students and Mental Health

Mental Health is currently in the spotlight in both the media and with action and awareness groups. As you are no doubt aware we do a lot of work at Shenley Academy to support students suffering with mental health. This is to enable students to function in the school environment but also to help them recognise triggers and sources of their condition. As part of this we have recently started to refer some students to Pause, Forward Thinking

Pause is a city centre drop-in service; it is a bit different to other mental health services. They aren't going to turn you away if you just want to drop-in and have a chat with someone about how you're feeling, or if you wanted to have a browse in their tech-space about things you might be worried about. Dropping in doesn't mean there is something wrong with you or that you are losing your marbles! They are there to support you in exploring your thoughts, feelings and emotions, or anything that might be going on in your life, that you need help working out.

No doctor's referral is required. In some cases young people will be referred on for more specific counselling but can still use the facilities at Pause whilst awaiting their counselling assessment.

Recently one of our students visited Pause and this is their account;

‘Pause is a great place to go because no matter how you feel or what you say they are supportive and they listen. You could go there not wanting to talk to anyone and that would be fine. You can sit and play games while you talk or you could just talk. If you don’t know where to start they can always ask you questions, which is the option I chose. You can talk about anything because it is a safe place where you won’t be judged’.

Pause is just one of the support systems that we use in conjunction with one to one support within the school.

Pause,
21 Digbeth
Birmingham
B5 6BJ

Our opening times are:
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10am-6pm
Wednesday - 12pm-8pm
Saturday and Sunday 11am-4pm

TOP ATTENDING FORMS THIS WEEK
13-3-2017 - 17-3-2017

JUPITER - 99.44% - J9
MERCURY - 99.00% - M5
NEPTUNE - 100% - N8
SATURN - 97.65% - S8
VENUS - 98.82% - V7 & V9
APOLLO - 98.33% - A2

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
YEAR TO DATE - 93.93% - THIS WEEK 93.86%
Past student sixth form assembly

We were delighted to see Mitchell Dixon, return on Friday to give a presentation to Year 12 and 13 students about his experience as an apprentice at WSP Parsons Brickenhoff. As part of National Apprentices Week, students really benefited from hearing about strong programmes such as the one Mitch is taking, as a viable alternative to university. Mitch told us about the work he is doing regarding a new arena being built as part of the Barcelona New Camp, showing us examples of the computer-aided design work he has been involved in. At the end of his apprenticeship, Mitch will be a qualified civil engineer. He was accompanied by his line manager, Chris Everell, who told us about the wide range of careers within a global organisation such as WSP and how much professional development support is given to apprentices. It was wonderful to hear how far Mitch has come since leaving Sixth Form last summer.

We also pleased to see past student Josh Cullen represented in local media as part of the group taking an apprenticeship in IT at the University of Birmingham.

Ms Heath, Head of Sixth Form
MOVE IT is 3 days of performances, shopping, celebrities and all forms of dance. There was something for everyone to do. I took part in a urban commercial class which was challenging, fun and the room was packed full of other dancers taking part. I watched a few performances on the main stage which were amazing. It was a fantastic experience and I would definitely do it again. Rushen Katungenza Year 9.

The dance department recently attended Move It with 33 students. Move It is the UK’s biggest dance event which celebrates all forms of dance. Students took part in classes, watched performances and discovered dance career opportunities available to them. The students were fantastic and thoroughly enjoyed the day!
Another win for the Year 10 football team, although they made hard work of it! It was a poor start for Shenley, a mix up between defence and goal keeper allowed Dame Elizabeth to prod home a preventable first goal. Despite dominating the rest of the first half, the boys went in to the break losing 2-0.

Refocused and full of self-belief, the boys came out for the second half with determination. However it wasn’t until 10 minutes into the second half when they started their comeback – a volley from 25 yards from Brandon Walton flew over the goalkeeper’s head to make it 2-1.

With renewed belief the boys kept on pressing and pursuing the equalising goal, which came courtesy of Luke Miller with a scorching strike from outside the area flying into the top corner.

With about 30 seconds left until full time and a 2-2 draw looking the most likely result, a through ball sent Mason Jones through who burst free of the defenders and coolly slotted past the goalkeeper.

The boys showed incredible resilience to overturn a 2-0 losing position, and we would like to commend them on the positive character that they showed throughout the game.


Mr Cannan and Mr Stimpson

Shenley Academy
Spring Term Diary Dates

Tuesday 28th March 2017:
Immersion Day 2

Friday 7th April 2017:
End of Term

Monday 24th April 2017:
Academy Re-opens for students

Monday 1st May 2017:
Bank Holiday Monday—Academy Closed

Friday 26th May 2017:
Academy Closes for Half-Term

Week Beg:
Monday 20th March 2017
Will Be:
Week One
On the Academy Timetable.
Theme for Assemblies/Form Is:
International Day of Happiness
DEAR
Period 3