



16 April 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Year 11 Study Leave

I am writing to address how we have changed our approach to study leave and exam preparation over recent years and provide clarity on the reasoning behind it.

Prior to the pandemic, study leave from May was customary practice. However, due to lost learning during the pandemic, updated guidance from the Department of Education was issued. This states that Year 11 are of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June and so daily attendance is to be expected at least up to May half term. Government advice is that study leave should be 'used sparingly' to ensure that students have as much contact with their teachers as possible.

Alongside this, after careful consideration and consultation with our teaching staff, we feel we have a significant amount of data and anecdotal evidence which points to most students benefitting from the consistency of a school environment with supervised revision and regular contact with subject specialists. For this reason, study leave will officially commence for Y11 on **Monday 17 June**.

Our primary concern is always the academic success and well-being of our students. Several factors have contributed to this decision:

1. *Maximising Instructional Time*

By maintaining regular classes, we can ensure that students receive the guidance and feedback they need from their teachers to excel in their examinations. As we enter the examination period, adjustments to the timetable including 'drop down' exam briefings the day before or morning of individual examinations will be put in place. The timetable for these pre-exam briefings will be released next week.

2. *Structured Learning Environment*

The school environment provides structure and support that may be lacking during independent study periods. Our teachers are readily available to clarify doubts, provide additional explanations, and offer targeted revision sessions, which can significantly enhance students' understanding and confidence. When students complete their examinations in a specific subject, they will be directed to independent revision under supervision.

3. *Promoting Healthy Study Habits*

By maintaining a consistent routine of attending classes, we aim to instil discipline and effective study habits in our students. Students will not be tempted to 'pick and choose' which subjects they focus on.

4. *Addressing Learning Gaps*

Our teachers have been working diligently to identify and address any learning gaps that students may have following their mock examinations

5. *Safeguarding*

We want absolute clarity about where students are at all times and that they are spending their time working towards exam success in these vital weeks.

If, in discussion with your son/daughter, you decide that studying at home **after May half term** is the better option for your child, we are willing to make special consideration for *exceptional cases only* for students to begin their study leave from **Monday 3 June** according to the following criteria:

- Parental request must be submitted to the school in written form (i.e. email to enquiries@jfcs.org.uk) by Monday 20 May where parents/carers are confident that their child is independent enough to study at home and be organised to attend all scheduled exams and pre-exam briefings.
- Students who are at or above their target grades across all subjects and have endorsement from their teachers.
- Students have demonstrated their independence and maturity by getting either 'Exceptional' or 'Good' for homework in all areas of their latest school report.

Any requests for study leave will be judged on a case-by-case basis. Please note that we will keep all parental requests on file for future reference and the responsibility for learning at home will rest with you as parents/carers.

As always, we want the best for our students, and we reiterate that we believe the best route forward for most students is to remain in school under the supervision of subject specialists. Thank you for your understanding and co-operation in this matter: your partnership and support are invaluable as we work together to ensure the success and well-being of our students.

Yours sincerely



Mrs L Hilton
Head of School