



DURRINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

GCSE EXAMINATIONS
INFORMATION HANDBOOK

FOR PARENTS/CARERS

&

STUDENTS

This booklet has been produced as a guide for parents, carers and students regarding the rules and regulations concerning examinations.

Copies of notices to candidates, which are issued jointly by all the exam boards, can be found at the end of this booklet. All students must read these carefully and note that to break any of the exam rules or regulations could lead to disqualification from all subjects. The school **must** report any breach of regulations to the exam board.

INTRODUCTION

We are aware that exams can be very stressful and we don't want to put any more pressure on our GCSE students by suddenly giving them lots of new rules and regulations to become familiar with. Therefore, we run all exams from year 7 onwards as if they were an external exam, meaning that all students are reminded of the rules and regulations at regular intervals before their final GCSE exams.

This year, GCSE exams will take place between Thursday 9th May and Wednesday 26th June and students **must** be available for this whole time period. The dates of the exams cannot be changed. They are set nationally to occur at the same time in every UK school in order to maintain the security and integrity of the exam paper.

CANDIDATE TIMETABLES

Individual exam timetables will be given out approximately two weeks before exams begin. These timetables will state the date, time, venue and seat number for each exam. Students are asked to keep this safe but, should a replacement timetable be needed, students can come along to the exams office at break time and a replacement will be issued.

Students are entered for their exams under the following name format: legal forename, middle initials and legal surname, e.g. Adam J Smith. This name format is shown on their exam timetable. Students will need to ensure that they write this name on their exam papers to avoid any confusion when the papers are received at the exam board for marking.

Each student has a four-digit candidate number which will need to be entered on each exam paper. This is also shown on their exam timetable. Please ensure students know their exam number.

LATENESS

Students who arrive late for an exam may still be admitted but may not receive the full time for the exam. There will be internal forms to complete and a note will be made in the exam incident book. If a student arrives over an hour late, forms must be completed and sent to the relevant exam board and it is likely that the paper will not be accepted.

ABSENCE

If a student is unwell on the day of an exam, and is unable to come in, please notify the school as soon as possible on 01903 244957. The Exams Officer will need a medical letter/certificate from the doctor confirming that the student was unwell on that day and therefore unable to attend their exam.

Should a student experience difficulties during the exam period (e.g. illness, injury, personal problems), please inform the Exams Officer at the earliest possible point so we can help or advise you.

As a general rule, should a student miss an exam, they will not be able to sit that exam on a different day. There is one chance and one chance only.

If a student does not turn up for an exam, and there is no valid reason, an invoice will be sent home requesting payment for the exam.

Please note that misreading the timetable will not be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of absence.

CLASH TIMETABLE

If a student is scheduled to be in two exams that occur at the same time, we are allowed to move the time of one of their exams. Students must note that they will remain under exam conditions from the beginning of the first exam to the end of the second. It is advisable for the student to bring something to eat and drink on these occasions. They should hand it to the invigilator on their arrival at the exam room. Students will be notified if they have any clash exams.

LINING UP FOR AN EXAM

Students will need to line up on the car park by the new sports hall 15 minutes before the start time of each exam. Rows are clearly identified and students should line up in descending seat number order.

EQUIPMENT

Students are responsible for bringing their own equipment to each exam. Pens must be **BLACK BALLPOINT** and most exams will also call for a pencil, rubber and ruler.

Gel pens and correction fluid are not allowed to be used. Highlighter pens may be used to highlight parts of the question paper but must not be used in answers.

The equipment for maths exams can be a particular problem and we would be very grateful if you would remind students to make sure that they bring everything that they need for those exams. Compasses will be provided by the school.

Calculator lids are not allowed in the exam room. If the exam does not warrant a calculator, students are not allowed to bring one into the exam room.

Students are allowed to bring a pencil case into the room but it has to be a clear one. Alternatively, they can use a clear plastic bag.

FOOD AND DRINK

Small, clear bottles of water are allowed into the exam room but they must be free of all labels. Bottles have to remain on the desk.

Food is not allowed into the exam room (medical exceptions by prior agreement).

LEARNING SUPPORT

The two main areas in which we give support are reading and scribing.

Students who have been allocated a reader have been issued with a reading pen which they can use for all exams. Alternatively, they are to put their hand up and the allocated person can read the word or sentence to them but they are not allowed to explain what the word or sentence means.

Students who have a scribe will have an allocated person sitting next to them during the exam so that they can dictate their answers and they will be written down for them.

It must be pointed out, however, that this support is not something students or parents/carers can request in year 11. It is something that would have consistently been given during the student's time at school.

MOBILE PHONES/ UNAUTHORISED ITEMS

MOBILE PHONES MUST NOT BE BROUGHT INTO THE EXAM ROOM

Every student has been provided with a locker and they have been told that they are to lock their bags, coats, watches and mobile phones in their lockers before their exam. If they are found to bring a mobile phone into the exam room, the penalties are very severe.

Just to have a phone on their person, whether it is turned on or not (having a mobile phone on silent or vibrate constitutes having a mobile phone turned on), would warrant:

- ❖ A zero mark for their paper
- ❖ The loss of the whole GCSE
- ❖ A disqualification from **every** GCSE being taken

All electronic items (including calculators, unless the exam permits them) are banned from exam rooms. This also includes watches, headphones, iPods, MP3/4 players, pagers and any other product with text facilities.

Notes should not be brought into the exam room in any format – on paper, written on hands or other parts of the body, on equipment etc... If a student is found to have notes, whether they are relevant to the subject or not, the penalties will be the same as those detailed above.

DURING THE EXAM

Students will need to listen carefully to instructions and notices read out at the beginning of the exam.

The exam paper should be checked by the student to ensure it is the correct subject, paper and tier. If there is a problem, students should put their hand up to alert an invigilator.

Students should remain in silence throughout the exam and until they have left the exam room.

No attempt should be made to communicate or distract other students.

Doodling, graffiti or offensive comments should not be made on exam/answer papers. If this happens, the exam board may refuse to accept the paper.

INCIDENT BOOK

Every exam room has a book called an 'incident book'. This book is there for the purpose of logging any irregularities that take place during an exam. We have to notify the exam boards of incidents logged in this book and, depending on what it is, the exam board will decide if the student is to be penalised in any way. Examples of things we would have to inform the exam board about are:

- ❖ Bringing a mobile phone, MP3/4 player etc. into the exam room
- ❖ Students trying to communicate with each other
- ❖ Disruption
- ❖ Anything an invigilator thinks could lead to malpractice

LEAVING THE EXAM ROOM

Once students go into an exam room they are obliged to stay there for the duration of the exam. They cannot just get up and leave the room. This includes visits to the toilet. If a student finishes the paper early, they should use the time to check over their answers.

ENQUIRIES ABOUT RESULTS

If the school feels that the exam board has made an error, or that the marking has been flawed, then the school will arrange to lodge an enquiry about results as appropriate.

It is also possible for a student to make an enquiry about results individually if they wish. A letter detailing all the information about how to do this will be included with your child's results in August.

* Please note that all enquiries about results can only be lodged with the student's permission and via an authorised signed consent form.

IN CONCLUSION

If you have any questions regarding the enclosed information, please feel free to contact the Exams Officer who will be happy to help.