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Date: 16th September 2024



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Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope you are well. Your child has just started S4 and will sit their first group of qualifications this session. This is a very important year for them and what they achieve this year will influence their future choices. We are keen to support them to achieve their full potential and I have already spoken to the whole year group about the importance of good attendance, effort in class and completion of homework. Good attendance is key to achieving this year. Even a pupil with 90% attendance misses 19 days a year which can have a significant impact on the qualifications they can achieve.

As a parent of two teenage girls, I appreciate it can be a challenge supporting your child through this stage in school while coping with the many other demands of parenting teenagers! Children who are supported and encouraged at home have the best chance at achieving good results and I hope to share some information and tips to help with this.

Important dates for the year group are detailed below:

- S4 report issued 24th October
- S4 prelim exams 6th December – 19th December
- S4 Parents Evening 27th January
- S4 tracking report issued 17th March

There are a number of things you can do to support your child this year which are detailed below:

- 1) Understand the different types of levels and qualifications your child is sitting. This is often very different from the ones we studied at school ourselves. Here is a general summary of the types of qualifications being offered this year in S4:



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Type of qualification	Equivalent Scottish qualification when I was at school?	How is this assessed?	How is this graded?	If successful what can pupil progress to next year?
National 5	O Grade or Credit Standard Grade	Exam. Some also include coursework which is sent to exam board.	Graded A, B, C, D or No Award.	Higher
National 4	General Standard Grade	Coursework. No exam.	Pass or fail	National 5 or Level 5 courses.
National 3	Foundation Standard Grade	Coursework. No exam.	Pass or fail	National 4 or Level 4 courses.
Level 5 Awards (Often more practical or vocational subjects)	O Grade or Credit Standard Grade	Coursework. No exam.	Pass or fail	Level 6 courses.

Your child may be sitting a mix of these types depending on their progress in S3 in different subjects.

- 2) Ensure they are aware of the breakdown of marks in each subject they are studying. I have attached a list of different subjects and the percentage of each part of the exam or course. Pupils need to understand this if they are to going to do well. Teachers will discuss this with them and provide feedback throughout the year to help them understand which areas are strengths for them and how to improve in areas they are finding more challenging.
- 3) Make sure they complete all assessed coursework on time and to the best of their ability. Preparations for some assessed coursework has already started and if pupils do not try their best at this stage they could end up with significantly lower grades. For example, the assignment for Modern Studies takes place in October and is worth 20% of the overall mark.
- 4) Encourage them to study regularly at home and to attend study sessions offered at school. Details of these will be shared after the September weekend.

I hope you find this information useful. If you have any concerns about your child's progress, please contact their Pupil Support teacher in the first instance.

Thank you very much for your continuing support.

Yours faithfully,



TRACEY MCDERMOTT