



Dear Parents/Guardians

It has been another incredibly busy week at Hillside and it feels like time is flying by. I can't believe we have another long weekend to look forward to already!

Lots of our Year 11 pupils study Spanish and this week they have completed their speaking exams, a significant element of their final mark. Next week sees the start of the written GCSE examinations and I know Year 11 are going to have a busy long weekend revising and preparing for these.

All pupils in Year 7-10 have their end of year exams coming up and to prepare our children for their final GCSE examinations they will sit some of these in the Sports Hall. We know from experience that by exposing our pupils to this experience lower down the school it helps build their confidence and prepare them for the demands of the examinations they sit throughout Year 10 and 11 and of course their final GCSEs. I wish all our pupils the best of luck in their exams.

On Wednesday I had the pleasure of attending a graduation event for some of our pupils at Sefton Sixth Form College, we will share more details in next week's newsletter as part of the event a Year 12 student from the College spoke to our pupils about her experience of sitting her GCSEs. She stressed the need to start your revision early and not falling into the trap of trying to cram and revise everything the night before! What a message for all our pupils.

Amanda Ryan, Principal

Attendance & Attainment: Every Day Counts!

Now we are in the summer term, the focus in school turns firmly to exams and final assessments. This is a crucial period for our pupils, and we want to emphasise how vital good attendance is for academic success.

Exams are just around the corner, and preparation is now in full swing across all year groups. Whether pupils are sitting GCSEs, end-of-year tests, or mock exams, being present every day is key to:

- Covering important revision content in lessons
- Receiving last-minute guidance and exam strategies from teachers
- Filling in any knowledge gaps through targeted support
- Maintaining structure, routine, and focus ahead of exams

Research clearly shows that pupils with higher attendance achieve better outcomes. Even a few days missed at this stage can make a big difference in overall performance and confidence.

Let's work together to ensure every pupil is in school, on time, and ready to learn. By attending consistently, pupils give themselves the best possible chance to succeed—not just in exams, but in their long-term educational journey.

Your attendance = your achievement. Let's make every lesson count.



Walking and Talking Our Way to Success in Science

Well done to all of our pupils who engaged in the Science Walk and Talk exams last week. What a great start to a series of study workshops which allow pupils to listen to how an expert would approach the paper. Our teachers carefully model their thought processes to different style exam questions and then provide the opportunity for pupils to practice some timed exam questions independently. All pupils received two exam papers for home study per week now, and these are due for return the following week to one of their science teachers.

In addition, all pupils received a Biology Quiz to Success Book which contains a quiz a night to keep the core knowledge recall strong. Hopefully these strategies and support can help pupils feel as prepared and confident as possible entering into the exams. Mrs Wardale is very proud of the engagement in the Walk and Talk and by how many pupils have stopped her last week asking for more study materials! What a great attitude to have! The science team wish you all the best of luck in your study!

Mrs Wardale



Key Dates 2024-2025

Monday 5th May—Bank Holiday—School Closed

Tuesday 6th May—Pupils Return to School

Wednesday 7th May — Year 11 Core Progress Meetings—Invited Pupils Only

Thursday 22nd May —Year 7 Progress Evening—4:15pm-6:45pm. All Year 7 to attend in Full School Uniform

Friday 23rd May —Last Day of Term

Monday 2nd June —Pupils Return to School

Thursday 26th June – Year 6 Transition Day & Year 11 Prom

Thursday 21st August - GCSE Results Day

Photographs

Photographs : If your child has misplaced their slip for you to view their photograph, please ask them to go to the main office and Miss Mason will print them off a new slip. The photographers have extended the free school delivery window, this will close on the 9th May 2025. Thank you



Egg Hunt

On Wednesday 2nd and Thursday 3rd of April Year 7 and 8 pupils participated in a special Maths event. The children who had received the highest scores for their effort and behaviour in Maths were invited to join in a problem-solving Easter Egg Hunt. Problem solving has become a much more prominent feature in mathematics in recent years and our pupils showed the very best skills in completing the challenges, which involved Maths & Literacy, code-breaking, logical thinking.

Mrs Thornton



End of Year Assessments

Success is the product of daily habits.

Over the summer term, pupils in all year groups will be completing end of year assessments. Next week also sees the first GCSE exams for our year 11 class of 2025. The dates for end of year examinations for KS3 pupils are below. Year 10 have bespoke timetables linking to their core and option subjects, if they don't have their timetable they need to see Mrs McCarthy as a matter of urgency. The Year 11 GCSE timetable can be found on the school website in the pupil - Year 11 Section.

Year 7 End of Year Assessments

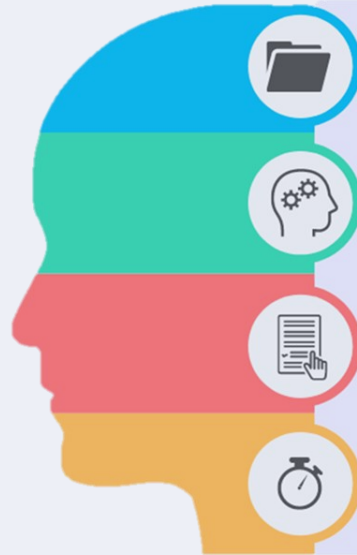
Wednesday 4th June– Afternoon – Maths Exam
Thursday 5th June – Afternoon – English Exam
Monday 9th June – Morning - Science Exam

Year 8 End of Year Assessments

Tuesday 10th June – Morning – English Exam
Wednesday 11th June – Morning – Maths Exam
Friday 13th June – Morning - Science Exam

Year 9 End of Year Assessments

Wednesday 18th June - Morning - Science
Thursday 19th June – Morning – English
Friday 20th June – Morning – Maths



Organise

Have all your work in organised folders, including specification schemes and practice papers.

Learn

Condense, summarise, cue card. Seek support when needed.

Apply

Organise materials against practice questions.

Practice

Do practice papers under time conditions.

Next week, pupils in year 7 to 10 will part in a practice sessions for their upcoming end of year examinations. During the sessions, pupils will learn the standards and expectations of how we conduct examinations at Hillside and practice lining up, finding their seats and checking equipment.

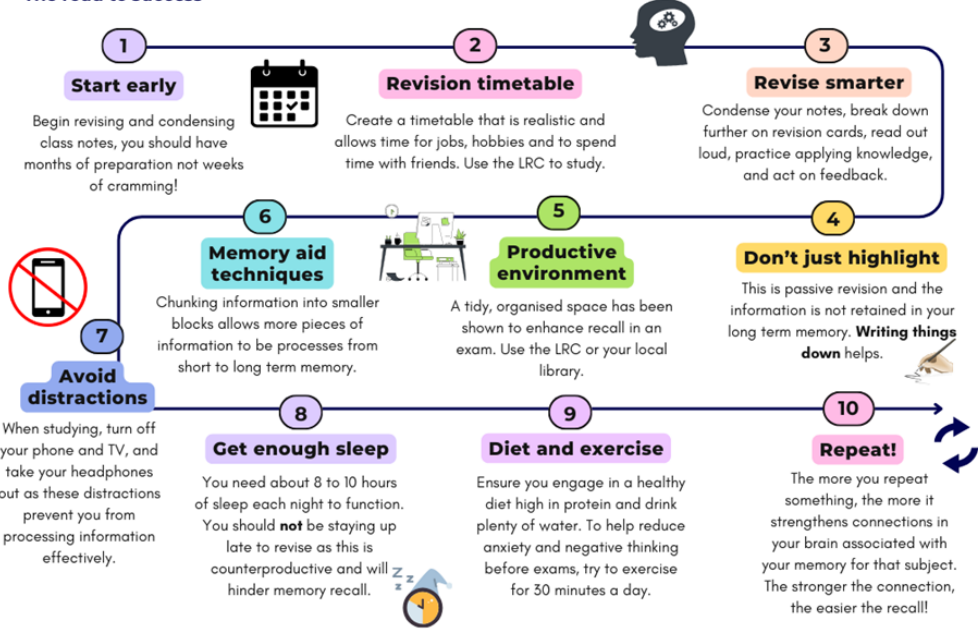
Attendance and a good attitude to learning is crucial during the exams as results will not only give feedback to the progress your child has made this year but also be used to inform the teaching of each subject. Assessment information also provides us with information about what pupils have learned and where they need more support in the classroom along with information to ensure that your child is in a group which provides the correct level of challenge and support. It is important that pupils are clear on when their exams will take place; copies of the timetables have been sent home.. It is also important that pupils are fully prepared for all exams and their subject teachers will give guidance on how to do this. I am sure you would agree the opportunity to practice exam responses and experience exam situations is crucial to prepare your child for the future.

Questions for you to discuss with your child,

- Do they know when their assessments take place?
- Do they know how to revise for each of their subjects?
- Are they completing meaningful revision in preparation for their assessments?

Top 10 revision tips

The road to success



Safeguarding, Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Knowledge Organiser

During this week’s assemblies we have launched the new KS3 Term 3 Knowledge Organisers. We also took the opportunity to re-visit the best ways that students can use their knowledge organisers to support their independent learning in preparation for their ‘End of Year Exams’. Below you will find an outline of some of the different ways that students can use their knowledge organisers to improve their understanding and progress.

	Look, Cover, Write, Check	Definitions of Key Words	Flash Cards	Self - Quizzing	Mind Maps	Paired Retrieval
Step 1	Look at and study a particular area of you KO.	Write down the key words and definitions.	Use your KO to condense and write down key facts from your KO.	Use your KO to create your own mini quiz.	Create a mind map with all the information that you can remember from your KO.	Ask a friend or family to have the KO or flashcards in their hands.
Step 2	Cover over the KO and write down everything that you can remember.	Try not to use your KO to help you.	Add pictures to help support you. Self-quiz using the flash cards. You could have the questions on one side and answers on the other.	Write down all the answers, using full sentences.	Check your KO to see if there are any mistakes on your mind map.	They can test you by asking you questions on different sections of your KO.
Step 3	Check what you have written down. Correct any mistakes that you may have made or missed. Repeat.	Check what you have written down. Correct any mistakes that you may have made.	Ask a friend or a family member to quiz you.	Ask a friend or a family member to quiz you.	Try to make connections, linking the information together.	Write down your answers and check to see if you are right.

Tips to support students at home:

- **Question your child on the content.** Ask them to draw a diagram or define a key word. Give them hints if they don’t get it right and encourage them to write down key areas that they need to work on.
- **Ask your child to teach you something from their knowledge organiser.** One of the best ways to secure knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of a topic is to teach it. Answering questions about a topic reinforces core knowledge.
- **Encourage your child to write the information in a different format.** Ask them to create flash cards from the key words or quotes.
- **Create good habits.** Use the knowledge organiser on a regular basis, making it part of your daily routine.

Pupils are expected to have their Knowledge Organisers every day to support their learning. If a student needs a new Knowledge Organiser you can purchase one via Parent Pay.

Miss O’Hara



Thought for the Week

