



Information and Reminders for Year 11

End of Year Events

Very soon I hope to be in a position to give you full details and costings for the Year 11 Prom, Year 11 leavers' hoodies and the Year 11 Yearbook, so please watch this space. **For now, please just 'save the date': Year 11 Prom, Friday 1st July.**

This week's revision strategy: The Power of Sleep

After a good night's sleep, we all feel refreshed, more alert and focused, so it is no surprise that during the exam period, having enough sleep is essential for our concentration and memory recall. Sleep is food for the brain as well as being vital for our well-being and happiness.

Some of the most recent research indicates that while you're sleeping, memories are organised in your brain. So, it stands to reason that if you're trying to learn something or at least remember it long enough to pass a test, you need to ensure that you get a good night's sleep and are not sleep deprived. In fact, teenagers need at least nine hours of sleep every night for optimum brain health. This is not always easy to achieve during the run up to exams because stress and anxiety, last minute revision or technological devices can be a distraction.

So if you are prone to disturbed sleep patterns, here are some ways that can help you get a restful night.

Eat at least two hours before bedtime:

A full stomach can keep you awake especially if you feel stressed about an exam. Avoid greasy, spicy or rich foods as these are harder to digest. Foods that are good for sleep include bananas (high in potassium and magnesium which help to relax muscles and promote sleep), almonds and walnuts (they contain amino acids which increases sleep-regulating hormones, serotonin

and melatonin) and whole grain cereal and fish (both contain vitamin B6 which helps regulate sleep patterns).



Switch off devices:

The light from mobile phones suppresses the production of melatonin especially in teenagers. Try putting your device away at least an hour before you go to bed. Our advice is to get into the habit of charging your phone downstairs while you sleep to avoid the lure of checking messages and social media platforms while you are trying to get to sleep or if you wake up in the night. This may seem hard initially and will require some will-power but you will be surprised at how quickly this ritual will become a habit.



Try nightly relaxation techniques:

Run a warm bath (add some lavender oil) and try practising a mediation technique such as the Body Scan. You can use apps such as Headspace or Calm or just listen to relaxing music to calm your mind and your body while breathing deeply. Try breathing in for five seconds and out for seven seconds for 3 minutes.

If you have never practiced meditation before, it might be hard to concentrate initially but with practice, this technique brings you calmness, clarity and improves your mental health in the long term. Studies show that students who meditate before an exam, perform better than students who do not.



Avoid caffeinated drinks after 4pm:

Avoid stimulants such as tea, coca cola, coffee and hot chocolate after 4pm if not before. One study found that consuming caffeine six hours before bedtime reduced total sleep time by one hour. Try having a warm drink, like skimmed milk or chamomile tea for increased relaxation and make sure that you drink plenty of water during the day to stay hydrated.

Write a journal:

If you find that you are tossing and turning, don't start studying again but write your thoughts on to paper. This is a great way to release any worries and helps your brain relax. You will find that you get back to sleep quicker once you have done this. Give yourself the best opportunity to perform at your peak by preparing in advance and getting into a good sleep routine.

Information from Universal

Mindfulness:

(www.universalmindfulness.co.uk)

Further advice can be found on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/sleep-tips-for-teenagers/>

