

2 February 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

Staff and students are gearing up for the second mock series for Year 11 and then Year 13. These exams are important in so many ways. They provide an opportunity to experience the exam process and for some students this will be the first time that they undertake certain papers in exam conditions. Also the mocks allow teachers to identify misconceptions or gaps in knowledge through careful analysis of students' answers and this informs lessons between now and the start of the external exams. Finally, students can test how effective their revision strategies have been. It may be an intense and stressful time for some students, if you have any concerns about your child please contact their tutor in the first instance.

As a school, we only ask staff to mark key assessments such as mocks, mid-year, and end-of-year assessments. You will not see examples of 'marking' in exercise books, instead you will see lots of examples of green pen work. We help our students to improve through frequent, targeted feedback over time. We believe that the best type of feedback is acted upon by students and the use of the green pen differentiates a student's first attempt from redrafting, development or correcting of work. Visualisers (a digital projector) are key to teaching at Longsands Academy and they particularly support the feedback process whether in supporting students in analysing excellent models prior to students completing their own or correcting/improving an example together as a class. Supporting students in learning to critically evaluate their own work is a vital skill in developing as learners. If you would like to know more about teaching and learning at Longsands or what students learn each half term, please visit the curriculum area of the website, where we added year group curriculum maps in addition to the curriculum booklet. Any questions you may have about how and what we are teaching, please contact enquiries@astrea-longsands.org (adding 'Curriculum: [subject]' in the subject line) and we will forward the message to the relevant subject leader.

We are so pleased to see an improvement in attendance, which was negatively affected by covid in October. We are particularly proud of sixth form attendance which has improved significantly since last year and this in turn is having a positive impact on the progress being made.

Finally, I would like to thank parents/carers who attended the Wellbeing and Mental Health Information Evening. If you would like to access the resources from this evening or other parent/carer events – they are available on the website : [here](#) and [FAQs here](#)

I hope you have a lovely weekend.

Dr C Cusick
Principal