



8 October 2021

# Year 11 Special! Dene Magna



*Clear views of school-Y11 news....*

## As the nights draw in...

What a great start to the year. It is so good to have many of the core aspects of Dene Magna life back: Seeing Year 11 students supporting younger students across the school, heading off on fixtures across the county, completing DofE tasks and getting excited about trips!

Every student has settled in well. They understand the task ahead of them and are working hard to achieve their maximum potential. And, as you can see, the 'enjoying the process' bit is still there too.

There are some important issues and events highlighted in this edition of Year 11 News. Thank you for taking the time to make sure that you are aware of what is happening across this busy time.

As always, thank you for your continued support and we very much look forward to seeing many of you on 21 October (see over), it will be great to reconnect and continue to build that support for students.

## Update on GCSEs

As you will be aware GCSE and Vocational qualifications have been severely disrupted over the last two years. In October OFQUAL (the exams regulator) published details about how grades will be assessed in 2022. The most important thing to note is that the strong intention is that exams **will** happen in 2022 for both GCSE and A Levels.

There are some small changes that are designed to acknowledge the disruption that has taken place for the cohort. The subjects that this applies to are aware of these and have built them into their planning.

With regards to outcomes, these are monitored nationally and the plan is that they will take into account grades achieved by students from 2019-21. The impact of this is that your daughters and sons will not be disadvantaged because of disruption to their learning.

There is also a contingency plan to use Teacher Assessed grades (as in 2021), however the hope is that this will not be necessary.

As always, the key factor in making great progress is how hard each student works. We are very lucky that Dene Magna students understand this well and are already stepping up to the challenge of achieving the best outcomes that they can in 2022.

## Year 11 Trial Exams

**Trial Exams will be running from 15 November. We cannot over emphasise how important these exams are. They will provide students with another 'practice' for their final exams as well as allowing teachers to identify where the gaps are in skills, knowledge and exam technique. The key though, is to develop confidence and ensure that students feel prepared and secure in their knowledge and processes as they approach May and June 2022.**

It is essential that, as well as doing trial exams, each student does 'trial revision'. If they do not do this it is similar to turning up to a dress rehearsal for a play without having learnt their lines.

We will be working on revision skills with Year 11 and Mr Derrick will also be leading a session with parents/carers during the Parent/Carer Information Evening on 21 October (see over for more information).

Each year we also have a 'Trial Results Day'. Results will be collected by students, just like they will in August 2022. The date for this is Thursday 6 January and we will send out further information closer to the time.

## **Period 6**

A huge thank you to staff, students and Parents/carers for making this work so well. It is such a crucial opportunity to ensure that each teacher gets more face to face time with their classes in the run up to Trial Exams.

Your continued support is very much appreciated. We know that these sessions work and have a real impact in filling the gaps in knowledge and going over learning from earlier in the course. As the year progresses we will make these sessions more and more focussed, however at the moment the priority is that all students are there and learning.

## **Year 11 Enrichment**

Enrichment is a big thing for Year 11. We have invested more time and opportunities to give Year 11s a broad range of experiences in their Core PE lessons. This is giving students the chance to learn new skills as well as brush cobwebs off some old ones.

As we come out of lockdown, we feel it is important to ensure that students live an active physical life, as well as working hard on their academic studies. Hopefully Wednesday afternoons will enable them to catch up on some of the opportunities that they missed over the last two years.



Enrichment is off to a great start, with multiple options available to students on a Wednesday afternoon. Over 30 students have headed off site for skiing and golf as well as a broad range of activities on site. There are still places available for off site activities, please get in touch with any member of the PE Department for information on how to join in with these sessions. The current activities will be running up until Christmas.

In January we will be running other off site enrichment activities so please keep your eyes open for information on that and encourage your daughter/son to sign up.

## **Year 11 Parent Carer Information Evening– Thursday 21 October 2021 5:30pm to 6:30 pm**

The best lever to success in GCSEs is that the school and parents/carers work together to support and challenge each student.

To help in that process we have our Parent/Carer Support Evening for Year 11s on Thursday 21 October.

We will cover the following topics:

- Introduction and update on exam processes (Mr Mitchell)
- How to revise and how to support a learner to revise (Mr Derrick)
- Wellbeing and emotional support. What we do at school and what you can do at home (Miss Beale)
- Sixth Form and the future (Mrs Balmer)

We will send an invite out via email so we can have a good idea of numbers. This will allow us to plan our now legendary 'Cheese and Refreshments'. Please keep an eye out for the email and complete the Google Form which will be linked from it.



### Term starts at the Sixth Form campus

With almost 200 students now attending Dene Magna's Sixth Form, the campus is buzzing with activity. We have access to all the facilities again and it's great to see students using social spaces such as the Wicked Coffee Shop, the sofas and the pool table.

Of course lessons are also underway and busy, as is iStudy - these are our timetabled supervised study sessions. A level students have fewer taught lessons on their timetables than when they studied GCSEs - so we help them to fill their free time with meaningful activities that helps to build their skills and their confidence. From learning to play golf, to supporting younger students in primary or secondary school, everyone has plenty to do.

### Sixth Form Open Evening - 10th November, 2021

Choosing which A Level subjects to study is important. Although you won't be looking at starting at Sixth Form until next September, now is the time to start making some decisions about what you want to do. An important first step is to attend the Open Evening at the Cinderford Campus.



This will give you the opportunity to see our amazing facilities and to speak to all our A level subject teachers. You can find out more about courses that we don't currently offer at GCSE, such as Psychology, Sociology and Politics. You'll also hear more about our pastoral and extra-curricular programmes, plus you'll get a chance to meet current students and hear about their experience of being a Dene Magna Sixth Former.

Use the Dene Magna Website to find out more details, in particular about booking in to attend the event. We look forward to seeing you there!

#### Key Dates

- 21 October: Parent Carer Information Evening (in preparation for Trial Exams ) and Cheese and Refreshments.
- 10 November Sixth Form Open Evening
- 15 November: Trial Exams begin
- 6 January 2022 Trial Results Day