



# CORNELIUS VERMUYDEN SCHOOL

*Respect, Resilience, Responsibility*

25 November 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to inform you of a homework strategy we are implementing with year 7 and 8 which will run until the end of the academic year in the first instance. This letter shares our rationale for change and key information about how you, as parents and carers, can support your child.

### ***Why are we moving to knowledge organisers?***

Research suggests that equipping students with the skills to be able to learn, retain and recall knowledge is key to the examination success. When your child is in year 11 they will be sitting rigorous exams. The focus of these exams is the retrieval and application of knowledge to a range of different contexts. This puts increasing pressure on our students to know and retain even more information for longer. Our short term memory has limited capacity and students find themselves unable to retain the information so they can easily become stressed. The secret to success is to regularly revisit the knowledge to be learned. This not only helps to make 'learning stick' but it also frees up our short-term memory for day to day learning and experiences. To this end, we are introducing Knowledge Organisers as part of our homework strategy.

### ***What are knowledge organisers?***

A knowledge organiser is a set of key facts or information that pupils need to know and be able to recall in order to master a unit or topic typically no more than one A4 page. Knowledge organisers will be made available at the start of each half term to help them remember what they are learning. Instead of forgetting previous learning, students will continually revisit and recall prior learning.

### ***How will a knowledge organiser help me to help my child?***

Many parents/carers ask us how they can help to support their children at home. Many are worried that they do not have all of the subject specific knowledge to be able to help their children and some worry how to check that their children have done their homework and revision. The knowledge organisers will help you to do all this easily.

### ***Here are some strategies that might help you to support your child's learning:***

- Read through the knowledge organiser with your child – if you do not understand the content then ask them to explain it to you – 'teaching' you helps them to reinforce their learning.
- Test them regularly on the spellings of key words until they are perfect. Make a note of the ones they get wrong.
- Get them to make a glossary (list) of key words with definitions or a list of formulae.
- Read sections out to them, missing out key words or phrases that they have to fill in.
- Test their recall with simple quizzes.

### ***How will teachers check students understanding?***

Teachers will plan their lessons to include a range of knowledge retrieval activities during the lessons, for example a 'low stakes' test where students are required to recall knowledge from their knowledge organiser. Teachers will also check that look, cover, write, check has been carried out to the expected standard.

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***Where can I find the Knowledge Organisers?***

These will be distributed to students. Every student will be given a Self-Quizzing book and a Knowledge Organiser booklet, students will be expected to have them in their school bag every day, and forms part of their basic equipment. They will also be available to download on the schools website. If a student misplaces a knowledge organiser, it is their responsibility to replace it.

***Will this strategy be used in all subjects?***

As reading is also another valuable tool that improves students' ability to achieve in examinations, in English lessons, students will mainly be set reading for homework. This may take the form of reading for pleasure or might be reading related to a set texts. In Maths, the Hegarty Maths platform will be used for homework.

Your child will be given a two week schedule to follow, which sets out the subject they should complete each day. The expectation is that students in Y7 and Y8 complete 45 minutes of homework each night.

All of this information has been shared with students today and we look forward to benefits this will bring to our students learning this academic year.

Many Thanks

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'N' followed by a large, sweeping loop that ends with a horizontal stroke.

Miss N Ounzain  
Assistant Headteacher