

GCSEs 2023

Advice and guidance





GCSEs 2024
Advice and Guidance Parents
and Students



GCSEs 2023 - Advice and guidance

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Oldbury Wells

Inspiring Education, Inspiring Lives!



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Year 11 Revision Information

Check here for:
Exam dates
GCSE pod
Revision sessions
Copy of this PowerPoint

1-9 GCSEs

- Since 2016 most GCSE courses have changed to linear qualifications with content heavy curriculums and terminal exams.
- 1-9 system, with a Grade 4 representing a 'pass' grade.
- Changes to A-levels have increased the importance of good GCSE grades for University applications.

NEW GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE											
9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	U		
<div><div><div>4 = C</div><div>and above</div><div>and above</div></div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 4 and above as currently achieve a grade C and above.■ Broadly the same proportion of students will achieve a grade 7 and above as achieve an A and above.■ The bottom of grade 1 will be aligned with the bottom of grade G.</div></div>											
A*			A		B	C	D	E	F	G	U
CURRENT GCSE GRADING STRUCTURE											



Revision advice



“ It never gets easier, you just go faster”
Greg Lemond:



Revision advice

- When to start
 - Start now if it hasn't already! – a little each week and build it up.
- Where to do it
 - Quiet workspace free from distractions such as mobile phones / game consoles
- How much to do
 - Quantity vs quality
- After school revision sessions –
 - Subjects are doing these individually, and some have started already
 - Use with caution – not a substitution for independent study





- Annual subscription paid for by the school
- Video and audio – access on PC, tablet or phone
- Stream or download content

Login details

Username = school email address

firstname.surname@oldburywells.com

Password = gcsepod (you can change / reset this)

You may have already done this, if you are unsure e-mail and we will look to reset them

(terry.cowburn@oldburywells.com)



Retrieval Practice

Practice bringing information from memory for better results.

“**Retrieval Practice**” is a learning strategy where we focus on getting information **OUT**. Through the act of retrieval, or calling information to mind, our memory for that information is strengthened and forgetting is less likely to occur.

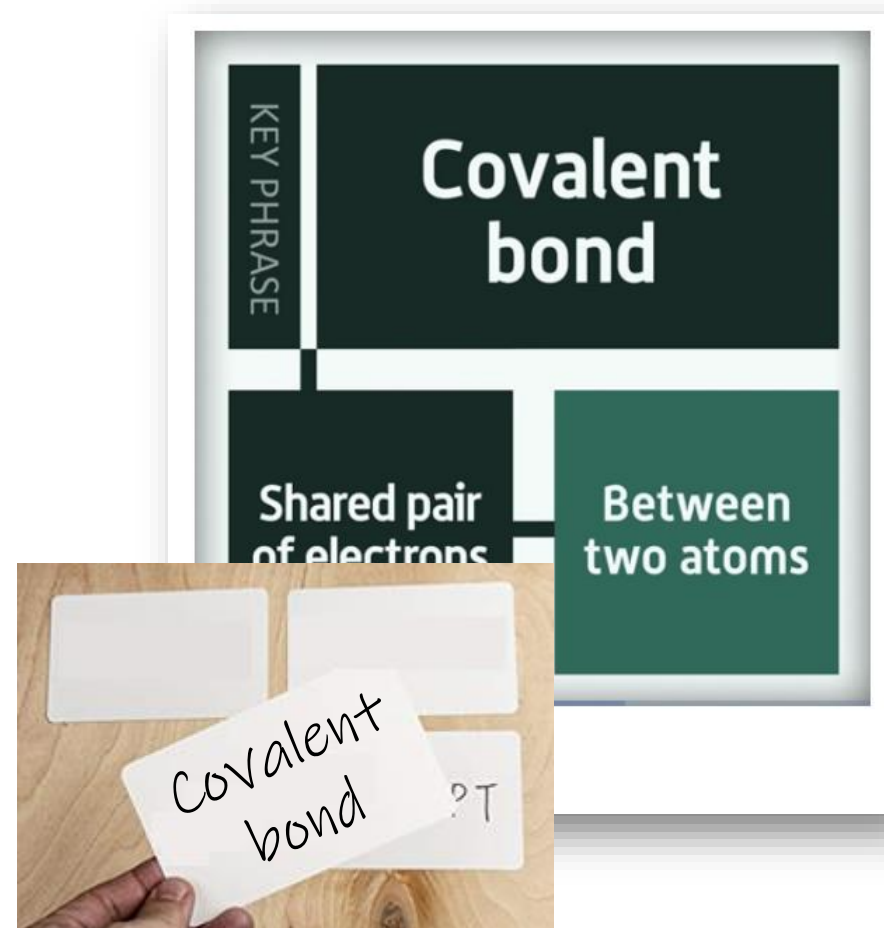


Retrieval Practice

Practice bringing information from memory for better results.

At-home activities using Retrieval Practice

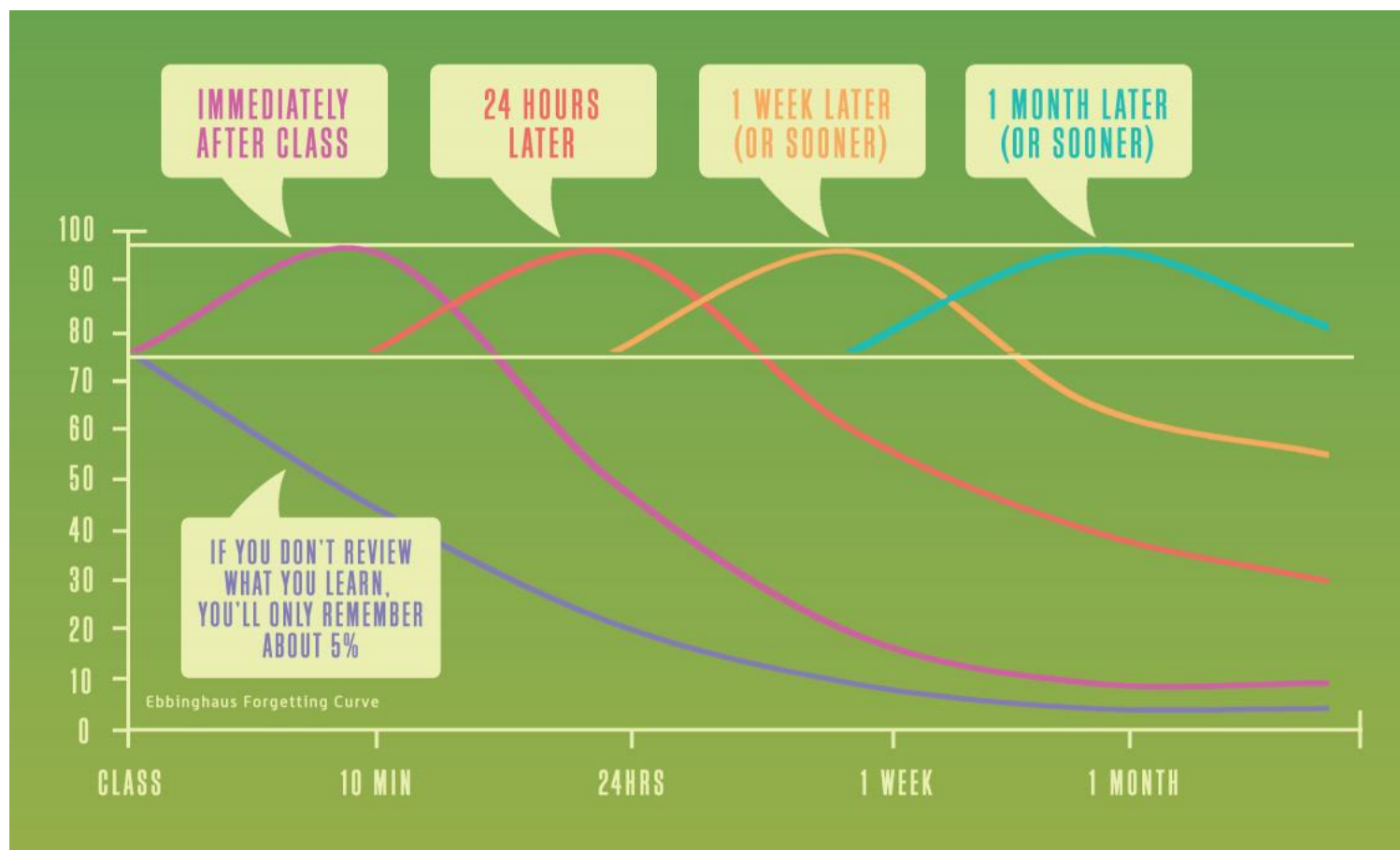
- Watch a Pod with your child.
- Ask your child to write key words on a flash card.
- Watch the Pod again – your child should summarise their knowledge of each key word on the back of each flash card.
- Allow your child time to flesh out their cards with as much information as they can remember.
- Test your child by asking them to define the flash card words without looking.



Spaced Practice

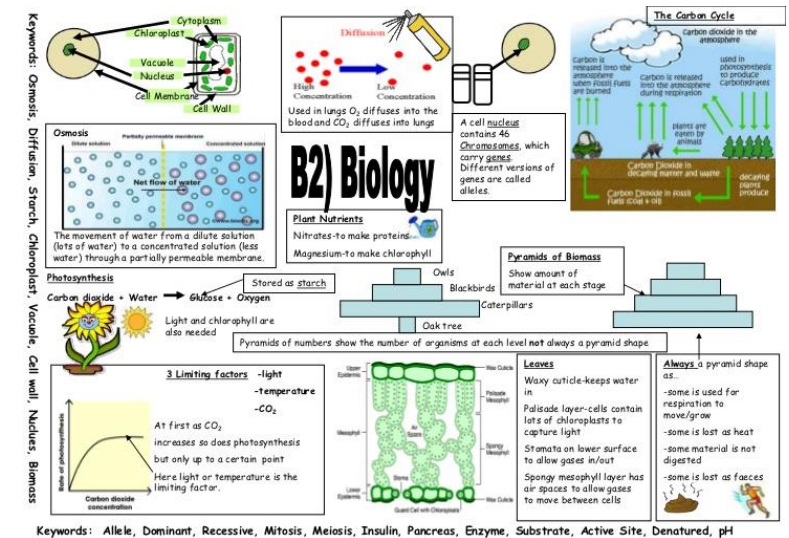
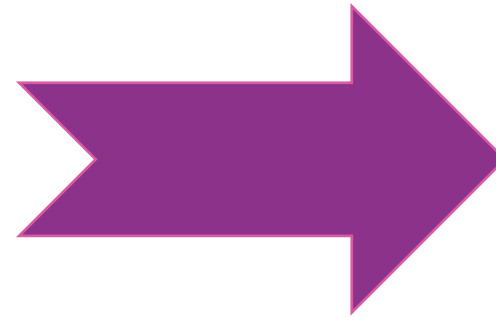
Revise, rest, repeat.....space out revision for better results

It has been proven that by reviewing at regular intervals, you can reduce how much you forget to just 10%.



Dual Coding

Just reading text alone improves our memory by 10% in 3 days but looking at the picture we are likely to remember 65%.



Watch a Pod together, then using the images from the Pod, suggest your child draws a poster combining the images with keywords and definitions. Copying the labelled diagrams in the Pods helps the knowledge to stick!

Interleaving

Interleave revision to remember more

Interleaved practice is a learning technique that involves switching between topics and ideas and has been shown to improve long-term learning relative to blocked study of the same idea or topic.



Interleaving

Interleave revision to remember more

- Ask your child to create a learning/revision timetable using the interleaved practice example below. They should choose topics that are similar and related either from the same subject or a different one.
- The Pods on GCSEPod are set out in a very clear and organised way. This makes it easier for your child to plan out their revision so that similar and related ideas and concepts, such as in Maths and Science, are studied together and in different orders, rather than separately and/or always in the same order.

Less Effective Blocked Practice

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5
Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5
Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5

Highly Effective Interleaved Practice

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Topic 1	Topic 4	Topic 2	Topic 5	Topic 3
Topic 2	Topic 5	Topic 3	Topic 1	Topic 4
Topic 3	Topic 1	Topic 4	Topic 2	Topic 5

- Your child can watch the Pods on each topic and then complete active tasks from the previous slides.

- Online System for Setting and Monitoring Homework
- Students have their homework posted straight to their account by teachers and can access it from anywhere using computer/phone/tablet
- Parents can register an account (using a parent code) and monitor homework that has been set and submitted for their son/daughter. (you should have this already, if not please contact us)

How we will use it:

- All homework will be set on SMHW
- Homework will be marked as “Submitted” (or not) when it has been completed
- We will not be submitting homework marks/grades.



How to get registered:

- Parents – You will need a “parent code” this was sent home during the first week of term via your son/daughter.
 - If you would like this re-issuing, please leave your name, e-mail address and name of your son/daughter on the sign-up sheet before you leave and these details will be e-mailed to you.
 - If you have more than one child at OWS – you will need more than one parent code, but they are managed through the one SMHW account
- Students – Use their school e-mail address & password and then “Sign-In with Office 365” option.



Advice from Core Subjects



English Linear GCSE

Mrs Lawson



English: What's new?

- A greater emphasis on **spelling, punctuation and grammar** (20% of English Language grade)
- **All** students are studying both **Language** and **Literature**
- All assessment is via **terminal** exams
- Revision, recapping, regular revisiting is essential. Closed book examinations – **learning quotations**.
- Students will have studied **An Inspector Calls or Animal Farm**. On top of this, **15 poems** and, currently, a full **Shakespeare play (Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice, Julius Caesar or Romeo and Juliet.)**
- Pupils will study A Christmas Carol after the mock exams



Which exams will pupils sit?

English Language Paper 1

1 hour, 45 minutes

English Language Paper 2

1 hour, 45 minutes

English Literature Paper 1

1 hour, 45 minutes. Shakespeare and pre 1900 novel

English Literature Paper 2

2 hours, 15 minutes. Modern text and poetry.



What can Parents do to help?

1. Encourage **wide** and **independent** reading. A little every day is ideal. **Good quality fiction**. Also, provide non-fiction too: regular reading of a **quality newspaper** (can be online). This is the biggest help you can give your child. (I know it's not easy – we will do all we can to cajole and encourage at school too!)
2. **Purchase revision guides** if your child is struggling – both for Language and for the set texts. **CGP/Snap revision guides are good.**
3. Buy copies of the set texts for your child to use at home. This means they can **write, highlight** and **annotate**.



What can Parents do to help?

4. Keep an eye on homework – **can you help them learn quotations and key points?** Talk to them about what they are doing. Could you read their set text with them so you can discuss ideas?
5. **Keep in touch with us.** If you are worried, concerned or confused about what they are studying or their progress, then contact your child's English teacher and we will get back to you. **Via email is best.** The sooner we are aware of issues, the sooner we can work on them.
6. Help with revision – using mind maps, visual clues, actions, revision cards, repetition and testing to help them remember



Maths GCSE

Dr. Kiapene



Information about the exam

Date of Exam	Thursday, 16 th May 2024	Monday 3rd June, 2024	Monday 10 th June 2024
Paper	1 (Non-Calculator)	2 (Calculator allowed)	3 (Calculator allowed)
Length of Exam	1 hr 30 mins	1 hr 30 mins	1 hr 30 minis
Content / Topics	All topics can be tested on any of the 3 papers. All 3 papers will consist of some questions which test mathematical knowledge in a straightforward way, questions which expect you to explain your reasoning, and questions which require you to solve complex problems. All 3 papers test easier topics at the beginning and more difficult ones at the end.		



What is new in Maths?

- A greater emphasis on problem solving and reasoning. Students are expected to be able to combine understanding from several different topics to solve complex problems.
- This means that practicing exam questions is just as important as revising individual topics.
- All assessment is via 3 terminal exam papers at the end of year 11. These papers cover everything from the beginning of year 9.
- This means that they need to start their revision now.



Tiers of entry

- Exam Board – Edexcel
- Students taking the foundation paper can achieve grades 1-5. 4 is a pass.
- Students taking the higher paper can achieve grades 3-9. The questions start at grade 4 level and half the marks are at grades 7, 8 and 9. Students who don't achieve a 3 will get a U.
- We use mock exams to decide which tier of entry will get students the best grade. In borderline cases we may ask students to sit additional short “diagnostic” tests produced by the exam board.
- All tier decisions will be made before Easter.



GCSE Further Maths

- Exam Board – AQA
- This is meant for set 1 students only and few other students who want the challenge and who are ready to explore mathematics further.
- We run lunchtime revision sessions to augment what happens in the normal classroom, focus on level 8 and 9 and additional mathematics
- There are two exams. Paper 1 (Non-Calculator) is on June 11, 2024, and Paper 2 (calculator paper) 19th June 2024.
- Each paper is out of 100 and graded from level 4 to 9.
- Some students attend the sessions not for the additional qualification but in support of the GCSE revision.



Revision Resources

- Personal login for the Mathswatch website. Videos and interactive questions, all modelled on past paper questions.
- Corbettmaths, a free website with topic-specific revision materials. It has validated video clips and solutions per topic. <https://corbettmaths.com/>
- Maths Genie, another free website with topic-specific revision content, past paper questions with worked-out solutions, and video clips. <https://www.mathsgenie.co.uk/>
- Practice papers which teachers will be giving out in lessons and for homework.
- Weekly after-school revision sessions that started on the 14th of September 2023. Better late than never.
- We are planning to run two Saturday revision sessions. 1st and 8th of June 2024. Just before papers 2 and 3.
- Revision guides available for sale.



How can I help?

1. Thank you for the reply slips
2. **Be positive** with them
3. Encourage them to start revising now, and to schedule short, regular sessions throughout the year.
4. Encourage them to make full use of the online subscriptions and other resources we have provided. Revision cards are great but practicing questions is better.
5. Provide them with a scientific calculator.
6. Encourage them to keep up an excellent attitude to learning. Their 9 hours of curriculum time plus home learning set by teachers are still the most important part of their exam preparation.



Science GCSE (AQA) Triple and Combined (Trilogy)

Mr Cox



Science Course Information

- All students will sit 6 exam papers
- Triple Science
 - 2 in each Science Subject
 - Each paper is 1 hour 45 mins
 - 100 marks
- Combined Science
 - 2 in each Science Subject
 - Each paper is 1 hour 15 mins
 - 70 marks

NOV
P1

MARCH
P2



Science – Tiers of entry

Triple Science

- Can choose different entry tiers for each subject

• Combined Science

- All papers have to be taken at the same tier
- Higher papers grades 4 to 9 (or 4-4 to 9-9)
 - Need to be sure of a grade 4 (or 4-4)
 - Very narrow compensatory grade 3 (or 4-3)
- Tiers will be confirmed by staff following second mock exams in March



Science Support – Year 11 Science Exams

- The exams need a vast amount of preparation.
- It is worth dividing them up into topics so that nothing is missed – use revision guides to help
- The full specification can be found on the [AQA](#) website.
- Exam dates for these Units are on the school website.



Required Practicals

- There are a number of these that have been covered during the course

• Triple	Combined
• Biology 10 practicals	8 Practicals
• Chemistry 8 practicals	6 Practicals
• Physics 10 practicals	7 Practicals

15% of marks on all papers will be based on questions linked to these practicals



Maths Content

- All papers have a significant maths content
 - 10% Biology
 - 20% Chemistry
 - 30% Physics
- Foundation Papers
 - Level of KS3 Maths
- Higher Papers
 - Level of Foundation GCSE Maths
- Topics include algebra/numerical computation/graphs/handling data



Support from School

- Explicit teaching of revision and reflection skills
- Lunchtime revision sessions
- Mind maps and knowledge organisers via SMHW
- Revision and videos for all required practicals
- Weekly revision classes from January 2024 with published programme
- Time blocked for revision before mocks
- Aim to complete content around Feb Half term



Science Support – What can Parents Do?

Ensure your child is preparing adequately for all the written papers.

- Ensure that they have a detailed revision plan or timetable in place well before exams.
- Ensure that your child dedicates time to know all the required practicals.....methods and data
- Practise the maths skills, particularly graphs
- Practise timing – pace needed is 1 mark per minute
- Do not waste any revision time



Science Support – Revision Materials:

- A typical weeks worth of revision might include a mixture of these:
 - production of around 6-8 key word **revision cards**
 - 30mins – 1 hour spent on BBC Bitesize.
 - 30mins – 1 hour spent using the revision guide
 - several **past paper questions** (equivalent to about 1 completed past paper).
 - As much maths practise as possible, particularly data analysis and graphs



Science Support – Revision Materials:

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/science/aqa/>
- <http://www.aqa.org.uk/exams-administration/exams-guidance/find-past-papers-and-mark-schemes>
- <http://www.my-gcse-science.com/revision/additional>
(this now charges a subscription fee to access some videos)
- <https://www.youtube.com/>
 - Search for required AQA required practicals
- <https://www.youtube.com/@Freesciencelessons>
- <https://www.stem.org.uk/triplescience/maths>



Mock exams

- The first set will run from 20th November to 1 December 2023
- The second set of mocks will run from 11th March to 22 March 2024
- Mock exam grades will be the basis for 16+ applications and references
- Revision – start now if it hasn't already!



Exams information

- The first GCSE exam is **7th May** and the last is **19th June**
- **26th June** - Exam contingency day (new this year)
 - Don't book holidays!!!!!!
 - If they have sat all their exams by 12th June then the contingency day will not be needed.
- It is vital they turn up to exams on time and are prepared.
- Equipment:
 - Pencil cases and water bottles must be clear
 - Exam packs (£2) and calculators (£9) available to purchase in the library.
 - Phone turn them off completely, including any alarms etc if the phone is on silent.
 - Wearing watches is no longer acceptable for exams
 - No drawing and writing on hands/arms which isn't acceptable. All toilet breaks will be logged next year as a new JCQ requirement so patterns can be monitored.
- These are external exams with external invigilators – any infractions have to be reported to the exam board



Exam Stress

Y11 can be a very challenging time for pupils coping with the stress of exams.

It is important that they take care of both their physical and mental health – getting a good nights sleep and reducing screen time are a key part of this.

Pupils needing support & advice with this can speak to **Ms Barlow** our Pastoral support worker.



Results day

Thursday 24th August 2024

8.30am to 12.30pm (West Hall).

- Pupils not collecting in person must send a letter of authorisation with whoever is picking them up
- Provide Mrs Wellings (Exams Officer) with a stamped addressed envelope to post them home.
- Or it can be a students personal e-mail address, this cannot be a parents
- Our Careers Advisor and Exams Officer will be there to assist and advise. It will also be possible to enrol at our Sixth Form on the day.

Exam certificates will be available from East Reception Monday to Friday between 8am and 3pm from 1st December 2024 to 14th February 2025.



Y11 Prom

- Date TBC (after exams)
- Who gets to go:
 - Everyone is invited, however they must earn their ticket through the prom passport
 - This is done by gaining 40 achievement points between now and may. Simple! However, their behaviour points will count against them each week.
 - Tickets will be made available in may having paid on parent pay and their prom passport having been signed off by either myself, Ms Barlow or Mrs Warner



Post 16 Pathways

A-levels & equivalents (BTECs, Cambridge Technicals)

- A two-year course of study. Most students study three A-levels, but you can also combine them with other qualifications.
- After A-levels, many young people go onto higher education at college and/or university to do degrees and higher technical qualifications, while others begin working at age 18.

T-levels

- A T-level is a two-year course that focuses on technical skills. One T-level is equivalent to three A-levels.
- T-level students spend approximately 80% of their time at college or school, learning the knowledge and skills that employers need, and 20% of their time on an industry placement.
- After T-levels, young people can either choose to continue into employment (including opting for an apprenticeship) or select a higher education course aimed at the career they want.



Apprenticeships

- Apprenticeships combine study with training in a paid job.
- Apprentices spend most of their time at work, with at least 20% of their time spent learning on the job.
- Apprenticeships are offered at all levels, but most 16-year-olds would enter an apprenticeship at Level 2 or 3. Level 2 is equivalent to GCSEs and Level 3 is equivalent to A-levels and T-levels.
- Apprenticeships are offered by employers, who advertise when they have vacancies. Vacancies are also advertised locally, for example through colleges, or on national websites.



Post 16 – Open days

- All information on the careers page of the OWS website.
- Hand out to take away

Post 16 information evening to follow early in November



- Among pupils with no missed sessions over KS4, 83.7% achieved grades 9 to 4 in English and maths compared to 35.6% of pupils who were persistently absent.

