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Dear Parents/Guardians

Year 13 Chemistry

Mr Rogers and I will be teaching your son chemistry this year. As you are aware chemistry is one of the new Linear A Levels. Both Mr Rogers and I taught A Level chemistry before 2000 when A Levels were previously linear. This experience has enabled us to plan effectively the course for this year.

Boys who have a solid knowledge and understanding of the Y12 chemistry are in a strong position to build upon this in Y13. We are delighted that many boys have taken some time over the summer to consolidate aspects of the course where additional focus was necessary. These boys have aided their chances of achieving well this year as ongoing consolidation of work is one of the most effective ways to ensure achievement in Y13.

This year the Science Classroom is available as an area for silent study for VI Form boys to use during their 'self-supported study periods'. This room has textbooks, scientific journals, past papers and a growing number of other resources which the boys will find helpful. We have asked that boys identify a double period each week when they will be in this room consolidating their chemistry knowledge. However, they are welcome to use it in any of their study periods. We will provide suggestions as to what additional work boys should do. This advice will be personalised, for example, where a boy finds organic chemistry more difficult we would recommend specific activities to address this area. For many boys we are recommending that they presently consolidate their Y12 chemistry by undertaking legacy F321 and F322 papers available from the OCR website. They can then mark these and use the results to guide further study. Self-supported study periods are not supervised by staff and boys need to take individual responsibility to ensure that they are using them effectively.

We believe that how effectively the boys use their self-supported study periods and time at home will be a major factor in their success in Chemistry.

Boys are no longer in the position where they could learn modules of work, be examined on them, and then bank their mark. There are also no resits within the course and no coursework, with practical knowledge being assessed in the written papers. The final assessments therefore draw upon all aspects of the course.

For those boys aiming at the highest grades, then we strongly recommend that they undertake the chemistry Olympiad competition in January 2017. The preparation for this competition and the completion of advanced chemistry problems will significantly aid in preparing the boys for the more complex questions in the A Level exams.

We look forward to working with your son this year and your continuing support is very much appreciated.

Kind regards

Dr Emma Baker
Director of Science