



The Blyth School

Year 11

**A parent's guide to
GCSE's**

An Introduction...

Your involvement as a parent during the crucial exam years can make all the difference between success and failure.

Parental support can be up to eight times more important in determining a child's academic success than anything else.

You do not have to be an expert in the GCSE subjects that your child has chosen to be able to make a real difference. You just need to know how best to spend your time at each stage of the GCSE process to support their learning process.

The hardest demand on our Year 10 and 11 students is that of understanding the long term importance of achieving the best they possibly can. Even if this means making some short term sacrifices to ensure they are truly successful.

The aim of this booklet is to provide you the parents with key points to support the GCSE process, alongside a timetable of events for each GCSE subject offered in the school to aid planning and revision.

If you have any other questions regarding specific subjects which are not outlined in the booklet please contact the school for further information.

Good exam results...

Good exam results are not based on what happens on the day of the exam. Many feelings will go through the minds of yourselves and the students alike. Are they

in the right frame of mind? Will they remember what they have revised? Will they get the right question?

The results of your child's exams are generally determined before they sit the final exam. There are 3 broad stages in the process of achieving good exam results. Exam success is about getting things right at each stage of the process and remembering what can go wrong!

STAGE 1: Learning the subject content first time round.

- ❖ The process of revision (looking at something again) makes the assumption that the learning of each subject has taken place already - every lesson does count!

STAGE 2: Revision.

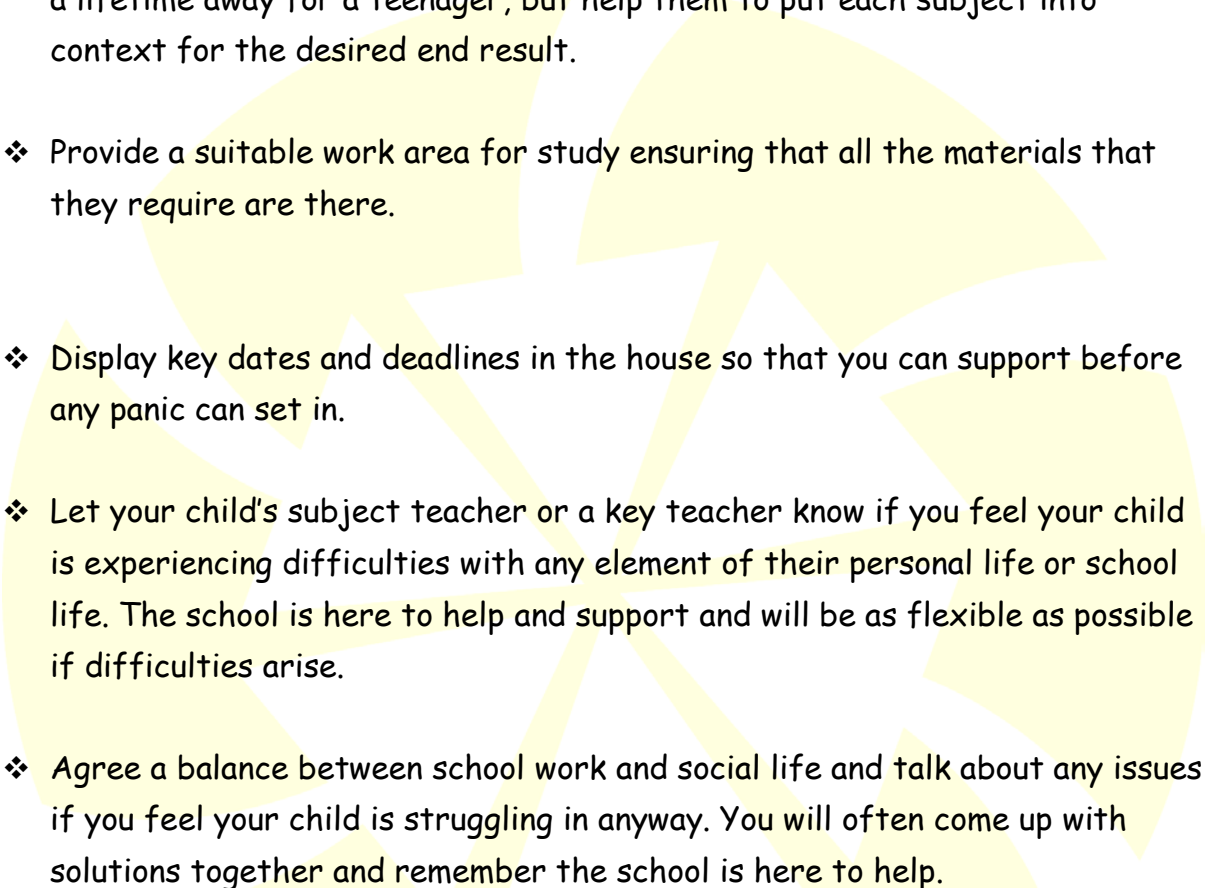
- ❖ Even a student who has attended every lesson of the course and paid attention needs to revise to achieve their full potential. Everyone needs to complete revision using techniques that are effective for them.

STAGE 3: The exam.

- ❖ Even if a student has learnt the subject content and revised thoroughly things can still go wrong on the day of the exam. There are several skills that need to be used during the exam...
 - Knowing the subject matter
 - Organisational skills
 - Exam technique

What can you do as a parent...?

- ❖ Encourage and praise your child. Show an interest by talking to them about what they have been learning in their different subjects and the homework / coursework they have been set.

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- ❖ Ensure that your child attends every day if possible. Even one lesson missed means that key information could be missing regarding coursework / deadlines. For the majority of subjects lesson content can only be covered once due to the volume of work needing to be covered.
 - ❖ Encourage your child to see the big picture! A two year course will seem like a lifetime away for a teenager, but help them to put each subject into context for the desired end result.
 - ❖ Provide a suitable work area for study ensuring that all the materials that they require are there.
 - ❖ Display key dates and deadlines in the house so that you can support before any panic can set in.
 - ❖ Let your child's subject teacher or a key teacher know if you feel your child is experiencing difficulties with any element of their personal life or school life. The school is here to help and support and will be as flexible as possible if difficulties arise.
 - ❖ Agree a balance between school work and social life and talk about any issues if you feel your child is struggling in anyway. You will often come up with solutions together and remember the school is here to help.

Coursework Deadlines

NOVEMBER:

History source work 27th November 2009
Geography end of November 2009

DECEMBER:

Dance Assignments 5 & 6 - 7th December 2009
Drama Devising plays portfolio - 7th December 2009
Child Dev 9th December 2009
History all coursework Friday 18th December 2009
PE Training Programme completion - 18th December 2009
French/German Coursework 2

FEBRUARY:

Business (GCSE) Unit 2 coursework February half-term 2010
French/German Coursework 3

MARCH:

Food Technology Coursework - 1st March 2010
Dance Assignment 7 - Blyth/Bed Dance Festival 23rd March 2010
Product Design & Electronics 26th March 2010 (all students submit a design folio and a piece of practical work)
Business (GCSE) Unit 1 - 31st March 2010

Science Easter Holiday 2010

APRIL:

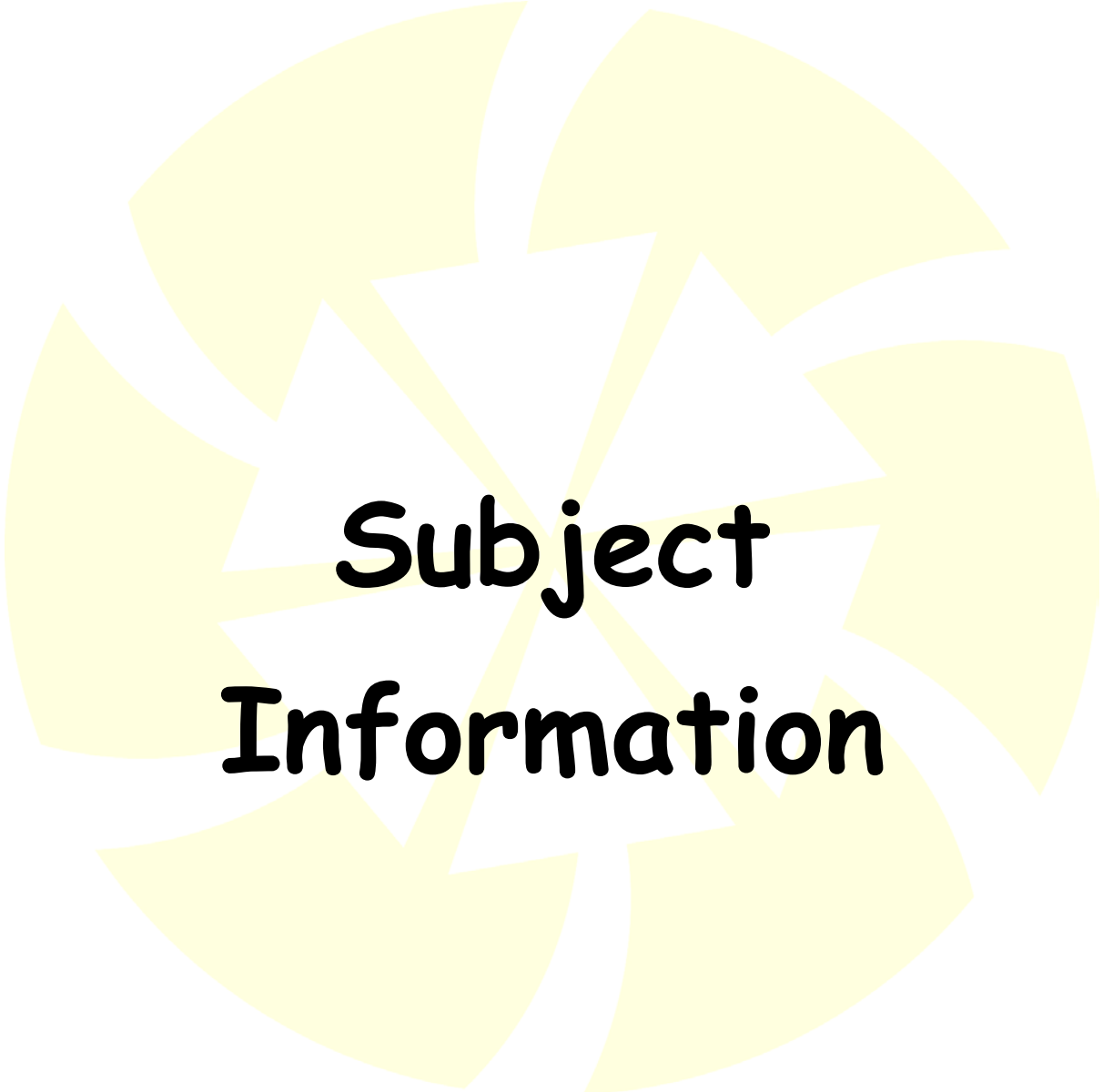
Drama Understanding drama portfolio - 1st April 2010

MAY:

Art & Design May 2010 (final date to be agreed)
Fashion May 2010 (final date to be agreed)
ICT & I-Media Single Award e-portfolio Friday 7th May 2010
Double Award e-portfolio Friday 28th May 2010
Business (BTEC) Internal - 31st May 2010 / External - 30th June 2010
Sample moderation - 30th April 2010

JULY:

Dance Assignment 8 - end of year performance July 2010



Subject Information

Art & Design

Coursework:

- ❖ Is worth 60% of the final GCSE grade achieved
- ❖ All work from Year 10 and 11 is part of the coursework project
- ❖ All coursework units are presented as a complete portfolio of evidence
- ❖ Coursework deadline is May 2010 (final date to be agreed nearer time)
- ❖ Coursework improvement sessions are held after school with class teachers and Head of Department

Exam:

- ❖ Is 40% of final GCSE grade awarded
- ❖ Students are given 8 weeks to complete preparation work and 12 hours to complete the exam
- ❖ The theme of the exam is set by the exam board

Course Assessment:

- ❖ The student's portfolio work is assessed in 8 areas;
 - Selecting and organising information
 - Recording observations
 - Responding to the work of other times and cultures
 - Analysing and evaluating sources
 - Developing and exploring (ideas and materials)
 - Reviewing and refining
 - Realising their intentions
 - Making connections

History

Coursework:

- ❖ Is worth 25% of the final GCSE grade achieved
- ❖ Every student is expected to aim to achieve a grade A*-C for the coursework
- ❖ They will produce 3 essays on the First World War
- ❖ They will complete 5 source questions on Field Marshall Haig
- ❖ Deadline for essays Friday November 6th 2009
- ❖ Deadline for source work is 27th November 2009
- ❖ Improvements to coursework will be made November 2nd - December 18th 2009
- ❖ Final deadline for all coursework - Friday December 18th 2009

Exam:

- ❖ Students will sit 2 exam papers
- ❖ Paper 1 is International Relations plus a depth study on the USA worth 45% of the final GCSE grade
- ❖ Paper 2 is British Depth Study worth 30% of the final GCSE grade awarded

Revision Materials:

- ❖ Revision for OCR: GCSE Modern History (Revision for History) (paperback) - Ben Walsh £6.99
- ❖ Revise Modern World History: for OCR specification 1937 - Greg Lacey £7.50
- ❖ Students will also be provided with a full set of revision notes

Law

Coursework:

- ❖ Is worth 20% of the final GCSE grade achieved
- ❖ All students have handed their coursework in
- ❖ Improvements to coursework will take place from November 2nd - December 12th 2009
- ❖ The expectation is that every student will aim to achieve a Grade B or higher

Exam:

- ❖ Students will sit 1 exam paper
- ❖ The exam paper is worth 80% of the final GCSE grade
- ❖ The exam is split into 3 sections with students being tested on content and skills

Revision Materials:

- ❖ The English Legal System (Key facts) by Jacqueline Martin - £6.99
- ❖ Criminal Law (Key facts) by Jacqueline Martin - £6.99
- ❖ GCSE Law by Jacqueline Martin - £16.99
- ❖ Students will also be provided with a full set of revision notes

English

English offer 2 *GCSE*'s: English Language and English Literature to all students. Some students in Year 11 will be given the opportunity to take *GCSE* Drama.

Students are given the opportunity to sit the English Language exam early, giving them two, or even three, attempts to gain their best possible grade. English Language is a compulsory subject for students wishing to enter Higher or Further Education.

Coursework:

- ❖ Is worth 40% of each *GCSE* English subject
- ❖ The coursework folder is made up of the following:
 - Shakespeare essay - giving a grade for both Literature and Language
 - Pre-1914 Prose essay - giving a grade for both Literature and Language
 - Media essay - giving a grade for Language only
 - Original Writing - giving a grade for Language only
 - Twentieth Century Drama essay - giving a grade for Literature only
- ❖ Information regarding precise details of texts studied can be obtained from the individual class teachers

Students also undertake a Speaking and Listening element as part of the specification. They undertake a minimum of 3 tasks, one that is drama based. The Speaking and Listening grade is reported separately on the *GCSE* results slip.

Exam:

- ❖ English Language consists of 2 papers
- ❖ Paper 1 has 2 sections:
 - Section A consists of a variety of questions on a number of unseen non-fiction texts. It primarily assesses reading ability.
 - Section B is a choice of tasks. Students will complete a piece of writing to persuade, advise or argue. It primarily assesses writing ability.

- ❖ Paper 2 also has 2 sections:
 - Section A looks at comparing and contrasting poems from other cultures and traditions. (Students are allowed to access an Anthology during the exam)
 - Section B assesses the student's ability in writing to describe, explain or inform

- ❖ English Language has 1 exam with 2 sections:
 - Section A is a choice of questions based on the novel or short stories in the anthology that have been studied
 - Section B is a choice of questions on a variety of poems - both modern and pre-1914. Again students are allowed access to an Anthology during the exam

Any students who are given the opportunity to undertake GCSE Drama as an extra subject complete the following:

Coursework:

- ❖ Working in small groups to produce two short pieces of drama that they've devised themselves. The first piece links by theme to their 20th Century Drama text and the second offers freedom to explore a chosen topic or issue. A portfolio is produced for each performance.

Exam:

- ❖ Students receive a choice of stimulus materials and are free to devise a short piece of drama. This piece is then performed in front of the moderator. The students work in small groups and produce the performance and the portfolio as a controlled assessment.

Revision Materials:

- ❖ BBC Bitesize - English Language and English Literature.

Mathematics

Coursework:

- ❖ Students no longer have coursework to complete in Maths

Exam:

- ❖ Students will sit modular papers
- ❖ Students are re-sitting Module 3 on November 13th 2009. Some students will re-sit Module 1 & 3 on 2nd March 2010
- ❖ Module 5 exams take place on 7th and 11th June 2010

Revision Materials:

- ❖ All students have been given a Mathswatch CD
- ❖ Students are also used to accessing www.Mymaths.co.uk (passwords - blyth - compass)
- ❖ Revision guides can be bought from the staff at a price of £2.25

PE

Coursework:

- ❖ GCSE PE Coursework is worth 60% of the final GCSE grade awarded
- ❖ It is a 2 part piece of work
 - Section 1 - Plan, Perform, Monitor and Evaluate a Health-related Exercise Programme to Improve Performance (total 80 marks)
 - Section 2 - Practical Performance in four activities chosen from at least two of the following activity areas (total 400 marks):
 - Games, Gymnastics, Dance, Athletics, Swimming, Outdoor & Adventurous
- ❖ Practical performance is a continuous assessment throughout the duration of the course in the various chosen activities
- ❖ The training programme starts in the summer term of Year 10 and carries through Year 11
- ❖ Deadline for completion of training programme - 18th December 2009

Exam:

- ❖ The GCSE exam is worth 40% of the GCSE grade awarded.

Revision Materials:

- ❖ Information to support revision can be found in the student shared area of the school network.

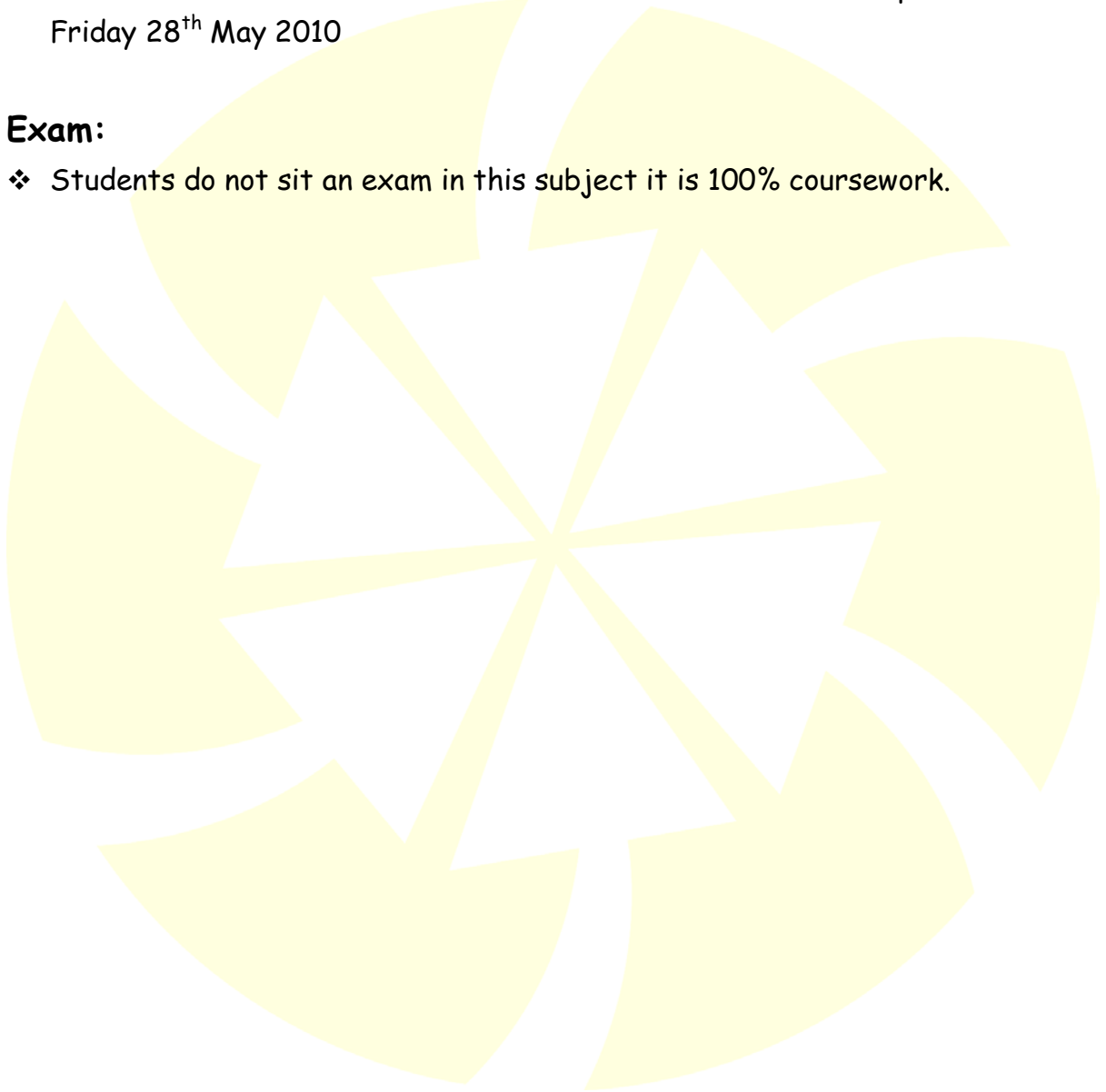
ICT & I-Media

Coursework:

- ❖ Year 11 single award student's deadline for e-portfolio is Friday May 7th 2010
- ❖ Year 11 I-Media & Double Award ICT student's deadline for e-portfolio is Friday 28th May 2010

Exam:

- ❖ Students do not sit an exam in this subject it is 100% coursework.



Fashion

Coursework:

- ❖ Is worth 60% of the final GCSE grade achieved
- ❖ All work from Year 10 and 11 is part of the coursework project
- ❖ All coursework units are presented as a complete portfolio of evidence
- ❖ Coursework deadline is May 2010 (final date to be agreed nearer time)
- ❖ Coursework improvement sessions are held after school with class teachers and Head of Department

Exam:

- ❖ Is 40% of final GCSE grade awarded
- ❖ Students are given 8 weeks to complete preparation work and 12 hours to complete the exam
- ❖ The theme of the exam is set by the exam board

Course Assessment:

- ❖ The student's portfolio work is assessed in 8 areas;
 - Selecting and organising information
 - Recording observations
 - Responding to the work of other times and cultures
 - Analysing and evaluating sources
 - Developing and exploring (ideas and materials)
 - Reviewing and refining
 - Realising their intentions
 - Making connections

Dance

Coursework:

- ❖ Assignment 5 - Understanding Dance History
 - Students need to present their research on a genre of dance of their own choice. It is presented in their written work book.
 - Deadline is 7th December 2009
- ❖ Assignment 6 - Understanding Dance Choreography
 - Students have taken part in choreography workshops and are now working in groups to create their own dance in a style of their choice using appropriate choreography techniques. Students need to perform their work to an audience.
 - Deadline is 7th December 2009
- ❖ Assignment 7 - Jazz Dance
 - Students attend technique class and learn new choreography and perform in two styles: musical theatre and commercial dance.
 - Deadline is Blyth / Bedlington Dance Festival - March 23rd 2010.
- ❖ Assignment 8 - Performing to an Audience
 - Students produce a performance and create a written evaluation.
 - Deadline is End of Year performance - July 2010

Exam:

- ❖ There is no formal examination in this subject. Students are assessed throughout the course.

Revision Materials:

- ❖ Students and parents should always refer to the assignment brief for details of the task set and appropriate revision materials, as well as the assessment criteria.
- ❖ Students should be working on the development of their own dance technique at home.
- ❖ Students are also recommended to attend dance classes other than those provided in curriculum time.
- ❖ <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/firsts/pa-music/pa/Pages/default.aspx>

Drama

Students follow the BTEC First Certificate in Acting. It is a practical work-related course. Students learn by completing projects and assignments that are based on realistic workplace situations.

Coursework:

- ❖ In each portfolio students need to have the following evidence:
 - DVD evidence of practical work
 - Annotated digital photographs of work in progress
 - Character diary entry
 - Performance process commentary
 - Evaluation of performance
 - Teacher support statement
- ❖ Devising Plays Portfolio deadline - 7th December 2009
- ❖ Understanding Drama Portfolio deadline - April 1st 2010

Exam:

- ❖ Students do not sit an exam in this subject it is 100% coursework. All students must have enough evidence in their portfolio to pass the course.

Revision Materials:

- ❖ <http://theatrehistory.com>
- ❖ Hodgson J and Richards E - Improvisation (Methuen 1977)
- ❖ Johnston C - House of Games (Nick Hern Books, 1998)
- ❖ Johnstone K - Impro (Methuen, 1981)
- ❖ Johnstone K - Impro for story tellers (Faber, 1999)
- ❖ Lamden G - Devising: A handbook for Drama and Theatre Students (Hodder & Stoughton, 2000)

Design & Technology

This information relates to the following subjects: Product Design, Textiles, Electronic Products, Food Technology and Child Development.

Coursework:

- ❖ Coursework in Child Development is worth 50% of the overall GCSE grade awarded
- ❖ All other D&T subjects the coursework is worth 60% of the final GCSE grade awarded
- ❖ Coursework is monitored monthly within the department and regular feedback letters are sent home to parents
- ❖ Final coursework deadlines are:
 - Food Technology - 1st March 2010
 - Child Development - 9th December 2009
 - Product Design and Electronics - 26th March 2010 (all students should submit a design folio and a piece of practical work)

Exam:

- ❖ Students sit one exam paper lasting 2 hours
- ❖ They will be entered for either Foundation or Higher based on their coursework portfolio
- ❖ Food Technology students receive a preparation sheet around 1st March 2010 which outlines the focus of the exam paper and staff deliver a unit of work based on the knowledge students will require to be successful

Revision Materials:

- ❖ GCSE Bitesize from the BBC website
- ❖ Revision materials will be provided during the preparation sheet work that takes place from March 1st 2010

Geography

Coursework:

- ❖ Coursework is due by the end of November for current year 11 students

Exam:

- ❖ Year 11 have 2 exam papers to complete which are provisionally taking place on 14th and 17th June 2010.

Revision Materials:

- ❖ www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize

Business

Coursework:

- ❖ There are several units of work that need to be completed with varying internal deadlines as follows:
- ❖ Applied GCSE students:
 - Unit 2 coursework is to be completed by February half term 2010
 - Unit 1 deadline is 31st March 2010
- ❖ BTEC Business Certificate:
 - Internal Coursework deadline is 31st May 2010
 - External Coursework deadline is 30th June 2010
 - Moderation of a sample will take place by 30th April 2010

Exam:

- ❖ Unit 3 exam will be taken on 13th January 2010 with a re-sit available on 7th June 2010 if required

Revision Materials:

- ❖ Applied Business students:
 - Revision materials will be in the form of past papers
 - Students can access some materials from www.businessstudiesonline.co.uk
- ❖ BTEC students:
 - The school has a BTEC student handbook available from Miss Dalton
 - www.businessstudiesonline.co.uk also has materials for BTEC students

Science

Coursework:

- ❖ Science A Coursework - is an assessed practical
- ❖ Writing up is completed during lessons / after school / Science day
- ❖ Department deadline is Easter holiday 2010
- ❖ Additional Applied Science is a course which is started in Year 11 and completed in Year 11. Coursework will begin after January exams
- ❖ The Additional Applied Coursework undertaken provides 50% of the overall GCSE grade for this course

Exam:

- ❖ 2 modules are taught for January exam in Additional Applied Science course.
- ❖ Students will also sit re-sit exams in June 2010 where appropriate.
- ❖ Exam dates are provisionally as follows:
- ❖ JANUARY 2010: SCIENCE A
 - Unit 1 - January 14th AM (all year 10 students as well as Year 11 re-sits)
 - Unit 2 - January 18th AM (all Year 10 students as well as Year 11 re-sits)
 - Unit 3 - January 20th AM (Year 11 re-sits)
- ❖ SUMMER 2010: SCIENCE A
 - Unit 1 - May 21st AM (Year 10 re-sits)
 - Unit 2 - June 9th PM (Year 10 re-sits)
 - Unit 3 - June 28th AM (Year 10)
 - Unit 4 - May 28th AM (all Year 10 and Year 11 re-sits)
- ❖ JANUARY 2010 : ADDITIONAL SCIENCE
 - Unit 1 - January 25th PM (Year 11)
- ❖ SUMMER 2010 : ADDITIONAL SCIENCE
 - Unit 1 - May 26th PM (YEAR 11 re-sits)
 - Unit 2 - June 22nd AM (Year 11)
 - Unit 3 - June 24th PM (Year 11)
 - Unit 4 - June 16th AM
- ❖ JANUARY 2010 : ADDITIONAL APPLIED
 - Unit AP1 - January 18th AM
 - Unit AP2 - January 25th PM
 - Unit AP3 - January 20th AM

❖ SUMMER 2010 : ADDITIONAL APPLIED

- Unit AP1 - June 18th PM
- Unit AP2 - June 18th PM
- Unit AP3 - June 24th PM

Revision Materials:

- ❖ Revision guides for all 3 GCSE's are sold at school for a discounted price of £1 - see your science teacher
- ❖ Past papers will be provided during lessons
- ❖ In school students can access GCSE Review for science which provides topic based multiple choice tests with help and feedback
- ❖ Students will be given preparation materials for the pre-release unit examination
- ❖ Revision sessions will take place leading up to the exams in January and June

French & German

French and German is examined by AQA exam board following Syllabus A. This means that the students will complete coursework for the Writing Assessment instead of completing a written examination.

Coursework:

- ❖ Students complete 3 pieces of assessed coursework, which must be submitted before the deadline given by the teacher. Students can ensure an excellent mark in these by taking time to research, compile, check, redraft and present their best ever piece of writing on the topics chosen by the teacher.
- ❖ Provisional Dates are:
 - Coursework 1 - October 2009
 - Coursework 2 - December 2009
 - Coursework 3 - February 2010

Exam:

- ❖ SPEAKING:
 - A short test in French / German is recorded in May 2010. Students can prepare for this by learning the answers on their Interview Sheets
- ❖ LISTENING:
 - A test of ability in listening to French / German and understanding what is said takes place in June 2010. Preparation can be completed by learning as many words and phrases as you can, using the vocabulary booklets, books and files.
- ❖ READING:
 - A test of ability in reading French / German and understanding what is written takes place in June 2010. Preparation can be completed by learning as many words and phrases as you can, using the vocabulary booklets, books and files.
 - Past papers will be completed in detail in class and are important to gain experience about what to expect in the exam.
- ❖ Students are entered for either FOUNDATION or HIGHER in each of the 4 skills.

Revision Materials:

- ❖ Study and revision guides are available from the student's teacher now
- ❖ www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize - modern languages section is excellent for practice at all levels
- ❖ www.linguascope.com - is a fun way to learn and can be accessed at home with a password from the students teacher

