Our Ref: RDE/KON

November 2026

ALL YEAR 11 PARENTS/CARERS

Dormston SCHOOL
Knowledge is Strength

Dear Year 11 Parents/Carers

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your child for their efforts so far this year in what is always a long and tiring Autumn term. So far, Year 11 have completed an assessment week, continued with learning and are now getting ready to sit their official mock exams starting Monday 30 November 2026.

It is due to this that we must address the issue of attendance and the impact this has on attainment. It is concerning to see how many students at this crucial time are having days off for simple ailments such as coughs, colds, sore throats, headaches. There also have been a number of holidays taken. We cannot stress enough how important attendance is to assist your child in achieving their target grades to allow them to achieve their full potential.

The statistics are clear. 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 (below 90%). This demonstrates that at any ability level or background, that attendance has such a high impact on attainment, with nearly a 50% difference in pass rates. Evidence from our own GCSE results show the same.

Now your child is in Key Stage 4, we cannot stress enough how important their attendance is. Every college and job application your child makes will come to the school for a reference, where we input both attendance and punctuality. Also, everything they learn in lessons could potentially come up on a GCSE paper and they cannot afford to miss vital information.

As you are aware, we place students on Attendance Monitoring Stages when their absences reach defined thresholds:

- 10 sessions - 5 days - Stage 1;
- 20 sessions - 10 days - Stage 2 - medical evidence is now preferred to authorise any absences;
- 30 sessions - 15 days - Stage 3 - you will be invited into school to complete an Attendance Contract.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT IF YOUR CHILD IS LATER THAN 9.10AM, THEY LOSE THEIR AM REGISTRATION MARK

Anything further than this can lead to a referral to ESS.

Please see below upcoming time frame to show how little time Year 11 they have remaining:

- 14 school days until mock exams start;
- 22 school weeks until written GCSE exams start;
- Only 5% left of their school journey.

We have rewards for good attendance, with certificates, sweets and our Year 11 'Locked- in Learner P.A.R.RO.T.' Award being all part of this. We want the very best for your child and the only way they can achieve this is by being in school. In Year 11 simply copying notes up from a book to make up for lost time is not adequate and will not be enough to support their learning.

Thank you for your support as always and any issues, please email rdownie@dormston.dudley.sch.uk

Yours sincerely

Mrs Downie

Mrs Downie
Year 11 Year Leader