



# Little Lever School

learning together, achieving together



## **STUDENT GUIDE TO GCSE EXAMS**

## HEADTEACHER'S STATEMENT

You have approximately 360 lessons left before you start your GCSE exams. This may seem frightening to many of you and you may feel anxious and nervous about your exams.

There is no denying your GCSE's are incredibly important exams in determining the direction you want to take in life but I want you to know that everyone at Little Lever is there to help, support and guide you every step of the way. All the staff are right behind you and we want to see you jumping for joy in August when your GCSE grades reflect the hard work, determination and dedication you have shown during your time here at Little Lever.

You have important choices to make in the weeks leading up to your exams and these choices will determine how successful you are. My advice to you at this stage is simple:

- Know your areas to improve – what parts of the subject are stopping you moving up to the next grade
- Practice... It is not practice that makes perfect but perfect practice that makes perfect. Work hard improving your weak areas... they will become strengths! Don't give up!
- Test yourself... have you improved? Identify your areas to improve again and repeat the process
- Believe in yourself! We believe in you so believe you can do it!

This booklet states the rules and regulations of the exam boards that you must adhere to. It is important that you are familiar with these. Please take time to read through this and familiarise yourself with what will be expected of you.

May I take this opportunity on behalf of all the staff here at Little Lever to wish you well in your forthcoming GCSE exams. **GO FOR IT!**

Mr Mckean

## RULES & REGULATIONS

The major rules and regulations you are required to follow are issued by the JCQ, 'The Joint Council for Qualifications', which regulates all GCSE examination boards. The major regulations are outlined on 2 notices that will appear outside of the examination room called, 'No Mobile Devices' and 'Warning to Candidates.'

Please read the copies of these carefully and familiarise yourself with the regulations.

# BE PREPARED FOR YOUR EXAMS

- **Equipment**

- Get together **ALL** the equipment the night before. Your **BASIC** should be:

- ❖ 2 black pens
- ❖ a pencil
- ❖ a ruler
- ❖ an eraser



you may need equipment

- **NO** correction fluid is to be used in the exam
- All this equipment must be stored in a clear, plastic bag or case
- For certain exams you may require a calculator. Check in which exams you can use them with your teacher
- No other material must be taken into the hall and must be left in your bag
- Remember to go to the toilet **before** the exam starts
- Arrive at your assembly area at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam
- Your final examination timetable will give you all the details you will need: dates, starting and finishing times etc. It is your responsibility to look after this timetable. **Make sure you keep it somewhere safe!**

## DURING THE EXAMINATION – GOOD PRACTICE

- Read the instructions on the front of the question and answer papers carefully so you understand what you need to do.
- Fill in any information on the front when told to do so.
- Work carefully and write clearly.
- Don't rush. Pace yourself – if you have two hours to answer four questions, for example, make sure you spend half an hour on each. Exam questions are carefully designed and tested – they should take the estimated length of time to complete.
- Show all your working/rough work. Cross it through when you've finished with it. Hand it in with the rest of your answers. Leave yourself 5-10 minutes at the end to read through and
- check all your answers. Boring though this may seem, it is vitally important; you can often find mistakes/omissions and put them right. It could mean the difference between a Grade B and a Grade A!
- **During the exam, put your hand up if:**
  - ❖ you need more paper
  - ❖ you Need equipment
  - ❖ you feel ill
  - ❖ you have a particular problem and don't know what to do. You must not ask for (and you will not be given) any explanation of the questions – this is part of the exam.
- **At the end of the exam stop writing when you are told to.**
- Make sure your name and exam number are on all separate pieces of paper you hand in. If you have used more than one answer booklet and/or loose sheets of paper you must fasten them together with a treasury tag which an invigilator will give you.
- **Exam conditions DO NOT end until you have left the room.**
- Don't be tempted to talk/turn around/communicate in any way with other people. Your paper could still be cancelled!
- **You must not leave the exam room until you are told to do so.**

## **DURING THE EXAMINATION – YOU MUST NOT**

- **Become involved in any unfair or dishonest practice in any part of the exam.**  
If you are, this will be reported to the exam board. It may mean being disqualified from all your exams - not just the one you were caught in.
- **Talk to or disturb other people in any way once the exam has started.**  
If you do so, the same will happen as above
- **Take into the exam room any unauthorised equipment - for example:**
  - ❖ Bags, coats etc.
  - ❖ Ordinary pencil cases, notes etc.
  - ❖ Calculator cases & instruction leaflets
  - ❖ Mobile telephones, MP3 players or iPod's or any other electronic devices
- **Impersonate another candidate**  
This is a criminal offence and is dealt with by the police. You may be prosecuted in a court of law.

**Candidates have been disqualified from their exams in previous years due to their behaviour and mobile phones going off.**

# **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!**

# WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE ILL ON THE DAY OF AN EXAM

If you are ill and unable to attend an exam it is vital you phone the school first thing in the morning to inform us

**01204 333300**

You must also obtain a note from your doctor detailing the reason for non-attendance. There is the possibility of submitting this note to the Examinations Board to ask for **special consideration**.

The board looks at this in conjunction with other exam marks from the student in that particular subject, coursework marks. This will then sometimes enable them to adjust the mark and grade accordingly.

If you are feeling unwell, but still able to travel, we suggest you come to the exam and we can assess the situation then. In most cases it is better to take the exam if you can.

If in doubt – **PHONE THE SCHOOL.**

If you do not attend an exam without a valid reason, it is possible that you will be charged for that exam

## What is Special Consideration?

Special Consideration can be given to candidates who are present for the examination but disadvantaged. The size of the allowance given depends on the timing, nature and extent of the illness or misfortune. **The maximum allowance given will be 5%** of the total raw marks available in the component concerned, including controlled assessment/coursework. Each case is assessed individually by the awarding body.

**The following circumstances must apply at the time of the assessment and be supported by appropriate and up to date evidence.** Awarding bodies will not enter into discussion with candidates or their parents as to how much special consideration should be applied.

The examples listed below are provided for illustrative purposes only.

**5% this is the maximum allowance and will be reserved for the most exceptional cases, such as:**

- ❖ terminal illness of the candidate
- ❖ terminal illness of a parent/guardian/carer
- ❖ very recent death of a member of the immediate family
- ❖ very serious and disruptive domestic crisis leading to acute anxiety about the family

**4% very serious problems such as:**

- ❖ life-threatening illness of candidate or member of immediate family
- ❖ major surgery at or near the time of the examination
- ❖ severe disease
- ❖ severe injury arising from a car accident
- ❖ very recent death of member of extended family
- ❖ severe or permanent bodily injury occurring at the time of the examinations
- ❖ serious domestic crisis at time of examinations

**3% a more common category, (more cases will fall into this category) including**

- ❖ **recent** traumatic experience such as death of a close friend or distant relative
- ❖ **recent** illness of a more serious nature
- ❖ flare-up of severe congenital conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes, severe asthmatic attack
- ❖ **recently** broken limbs
- ❖ organ disease
- ❖ physical assault trauma before an examination
- ❖ recent domestic crisis
- ❖ witnessing a distressing event on the day of the examination

**2% the most common category of allowance – the majority of cases will fall within this category**

- ❖ illness at the time of the assessment
- ❖ broken limb on the mend
- ❖ recent viral illness
- ❖ concussion
- ❖ effects of pregnancy (**not pregnancy per se**)
- ❖ hay fever on the day of an examination
- ❖ extreme distress on day of examination
- ❖ allowance on last paper taken in a day when a candidate has exceeded 5 hour 30 minutes at Level 1 or Level 2 (GCSE).

**1% reserved for more minor problems**

- ❖ noise during examination which is more than momentary
- ❖ illness of another candidate in the examination room
- ❖ stress or anxiety for which medication has been prescribed
- ❖ minor ailments
- ❖ headache
- ❖ minor upset arising from administrative problems, such as wrong time allocated

**0% consideration was given but the addition of marks was considered inappropriate**  
(Where the request fails to meet the criteria, it will be rejected)

## EXAM CHECK LIST

Aim to arrive at school 15 minutes prior to the start of an exam **AT THE LATEST**. It is much better to leave yourself plenty of time in case of problems with the journey.



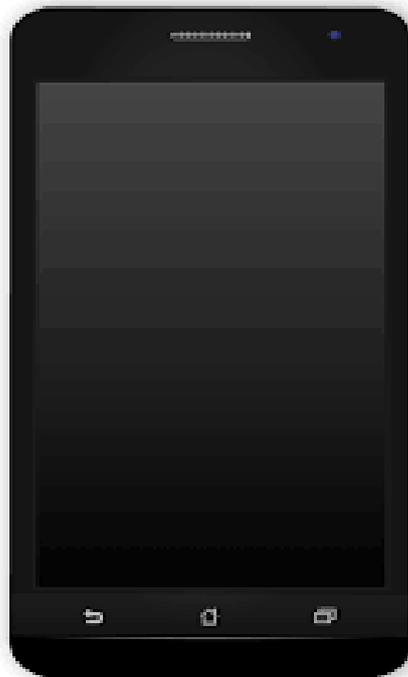
When taking exams, bags, coats and mobile phones should be left in the designated areas. Because of this, it is recommended that you do not bring valuables with you to the exam.



Phones – **Students must not have mobile phones or any mobile device, including smartwatches in their possession either on or off.** The minimum penalties are as follows:

- Device found on you and turned ON –disqualification for the entire subject award.
- Device found on you and turned OFF – disqualification from the specific paper you are sitting at the time.
- Phone rings during the exam wherever it is in the room the exam board must be informed and you will be disqualified for the entire subject award (including any already taken).

Also you should not have notes, in your possession. Leave all unauthorised materials in your bag (switched off!) - preferably do not bring them at all!



You should bring with you the correct equipment needed to do your exams. **Use black ink only.** Only clear pencil cases are allowed on your desk, any others should be left in your bag. **Do not use gel pens.**



In an exam where you have the use of a calculator, you should not have a calculator cover on your desk.



There is absolutely no talking or communication between students once you enter the exam hall. If you have any questions you should raise your hand once seated and an invigilator will come to you.



You should wear your **full uniform** for all your exams.



No food is allowed in the exam hall. If you have a special requirement please see the Examination Officer before the exams.



**Water bottles only** are allowed in the Exam hall. These should be clear bottles with a spill-proof cap. LABELS MUST BE REMOVED.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q. What do I do if there is a clash on my timetable?**

It will be indicated on the timetable if there is a clash of exams, with details of which exam to sit first and the start time of the following exam. If you have any questions then consult Mr Beal immediately.

**Q. What do I do if I think I have the wrong paper?**

Invigilator will ask you to check before the exam starts. If you think something is wrong put your hand up and tell an Invigilator immediately as mistakes cannot be rectified after the exam.

**Q. If I'm late can I still sit the exam?**

Provided you are not more than 1 hour late, for an exam that lasts 1 hour or more it **may** be possible for you to still sit the exam. You should get to school as quickly as possible and report to reception. A member of staff will escort you to the exam room. You **must not enter** the exam room without permission once an exam has started. It may not be possible to allow you extra time if you start the exam late. You should also be aware that for exams lasting **less than 1 hour**, if you start an exam 30 minutes after the published starting time, the school must inform the exam board and it is possible that they may not accept your work.

**Q. If I miss the examination can I take it another day?**

No. Timetables are regulated by the exam boards and you must attend on the given dates and times.