



**Pensby High School**  
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Headteacher: Mr K Flanagan

11 September 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

In Year 11 we have two parents' evenings one on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> September and one on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024. This year all parents' evenings will return to appointments with staff in school although you will continue to make bookings for appointments via the online booking system 'School Cloud'. Bookings for this will not be available until Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September at 6pm. This is a very important event to discuss your child's progress and to talk with their class teachers about areas they can continue to develop.

Booking is accessed through the Pensby High 'School Cloud' website: <https://pensbyhigh.schoolcloud.co.uk/> There are no passwords to login instead you enter your name and email address, your child's name, and their date of birth. You will need to book slots with the teachers you want to see, appointments are allocated on a first come, first served basis. Each appointment will last 5 minutes.

We know that a common question parents like to ask in some subjects is regarding what tier of paper their child will be entered for. At this stage I would request that you do not use the short meeting slot to discuss this topic as until the students have sat their second mock exams in February in subjects where they are tiered (Maths, Science, Spanish) as we will not have a full understanding of how they can perform across a full range of skills under examination conditions. At present we are focusing on ensuring your child continues to progress and develop their knowledge and understanding of their GCSE subjects, so they are in the best place to sit these assessments. After we have reviewed their performance in these assessments, we as a school will make a decision on their tier of entry in subjects where this is relevant and inform you and the students regarding this decision. I have outlined below our rationale for tiers of entry:

#### **Tiers of Entry:**

- Parents and students do not choose the tier of exam they sit. The school will decide who is entered for higher or foundation tier when provisional entries are made at the in March Year 11.
- GCSE tiers of entry will be based on current attainment as demonstrated by Year 11 mock examinations.
- Ofqual (the exams regulator) has been clear in the expectation that schools will enter students they believe expected to attain Grades 1 -5 for foundation tiers. As an example, in 2023 in GCSE mathematics only 42.9% of candidates nationally achieved grade 5 or higher. It has been recommended that borderline grade 5 – 6 and above candidates are entered for the higher tier. This attainment at a high grade 5 or 6 MUST be consistent across all aspects of study to be recommended for the higher tier. In 2023 GCSE mathematics only 27.1% of candidates nationally achieved grade 6 or higher. It should also be noted that on Wirral more than 30% of pupils are selected by 'ability' at the age of 11.
- Only students who are consistently demonstrating the grades indicated in this letter, or better, on higher GCSE papers will be entered for higher tier in February of Year 11.
- Students who are considering applying for sixth form courses in science subjects need to be aware that colleges such as Birkenhead Sixth Form are specifying a minimum of a GCSE grade 6 for entry to these courses. Grade 6 requires that pupils are sitting higher tier. Entry to higher tier is determined by progress and attainment to date and not a chosen future pathway.

**Minimum indicative grades for entry to higher tier examinations**

Subject:	End of Year 10 exam on Higher Tier Papers	Year 11 Mock (on Higher Tier Papers)
Mathematics	High Grade 4	High Grade 5
Spanish	High Grade 4	High Grade 5

Subject:	End of Year 10 exam on Higher Tier Papers	Paper 1 Mock on Higher Tier Papers	Paper 2 Mock on Higher Tier Papers
Biology	High Grade 4	Middle Grade 5	High Grade 5
Chemistry	High Grade 4	Middle Grade 5	High Grade 5
Physics	High Grade 4	Middle Grade 5	High Grade 5
Combined science	High Grade 4	Middle Grade 5	High Grade 5

Required across both papers

**\* Pupils who wish to be entered for higher but have not achieved at least a middle level 5 grade on a higher paper in Y11 Christmas Mock, will have to re-sit all relevant papers in week beginning 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024. All papers are sat after school in pupil's own time.**

Please contact me should you wish to discuss any aspect of this letter.

Yours sincerely



Mrs H Davies  
Deputy Headteacher