

Advice for Certificate Exam Students

DGS Guidance & Counselling Service – May 2017

With the state examinations just under a week away our thoughts are very much with DGS Junior and Leaving Certificate candidates. Exams bring with them inevitable stress and anxiety and the following few pieces of advice may help students as they journey through the month of June.

Study

- **Plan** - Have a detailed study plan set out. Ensure it is straightforward and realistic in terms of how much you can study each day.
- **Past Exam Papers** – Practice exam questions. They provide useful reassurance on the areas you know well while identifying some areas that may require some last minute fine tuning.
- **Breaks** – Take breaks and give yourself rewards for time spent studying.
- **Sleep** – Make sure you get enough sleep. You won't perform well in an exam if you are sleep deprived.

Exam Preparation

- **Timetable** – Ensure you are familiar with your exam timetable, full exam days, rest days etc. Visit www.examinations.ie for a copy.
- **Exam Centre Location** – prior to finishing classes on Friday 2nd June, check the exam centre you will be based in, e.g. Fingamore Hall, Harper Building.
- **Exam Structure** – be clear on the duration of each exam, its format e.g. short answer questions or multiple-choice? Timing is key so ensure you know how much time you have for each section on the paper.

Avoid Exam Stress

- **Eat Well** – Food rich in vitamins and proteins, such as green leafy vegetables and fresh fruits, are a must. Your brain needs healthy sustaining fuel to get through this busy time. Exercise, in any form, e.g. a short walk will leave you calmer and more focused.
- **The Power of Positive Thinking** – spend time with people who have a positive effect, it will rub off on you.
- **Practice Relaxation Techniques** - meditation, breathing exercises and yoga are great ways to calm the nerves and give you some valuable head space.

The Exam Day

- **Fuel Up** – Have a good breakfast each morning and be sure to keep well hydrated throughout the day.
- **Time** - before you begin each paper remind yourself of the time each section requires and attempt to stick rigidly to this.
- **Read the Questions** - read each question carefully on the paper and then select the questions you are confident in answering.
- **Check your Answers** - double check that you have answered all the required sections. Allow time at the end to read through your answers. Have you answered what you have been asked? If you have some time remaining consider attempting an additional question.

**Remember all the work and time you have committed this year will pay off.
Above all mind yourselves.**

With every good wish in the coming weeks.

Alan Norton.

School Guidance Counsellor.