



UNITED LEARNING RAISING STANDARDS PLAN – YEAR 11

2023-24

SECONDARY EDUCATION TEAM

'I never dreamed about success. I worked for it' – Estee Lauder



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Raising Standards for Year 11

In the schools with most improved or sustained high outcomes the following are key:

There is culture of excellence for all pupils.

Behaviour is exemplary in every lesson and on every corridor. The behaviour systems we have modelled work as long as the culture is one of respect for all and fairness. Pupils have to want to come to school because they feel valued and are taught well so they do not want to be sent out of class. The trust wide behaviour system places high expectations upon pupils conduct and attitude. 'Certainty – not severity' best describes the principles to which the system should be based upon. To work most effectively the system must be consistently applied in every classroom, on every corridor, by every adult working at the school.

There should be no pupils outside rooms or on corridors during lessons without a very valid reason or emergency. Every teacher regardless of experience should be able to teach in a disruption and distraction free classroom.

To ensure that this happens, behaviour is set by the Head who needs to personally lead this. However, the pastoral deputy needs to be highly respected and very effective. The Head should make the behaviour policy explicitly clear to every pupil through assemblies in the first half term and be very clear about why these consequences are in place so that pupils understand the link with their achievement and wellbeing.

Strategies that support this;

- Year 11s sent out of class should be dealt with by a member of SLT. Year 11s need to be in class – any time outside of the classroom should be kept to a minimum.
- There should be a ban on mobile phones in all academies (phones must not be seen or heard throughout the school day).
- Check uniform and equipment for all pupils at the start of the day using an effective central system such as line up or as they come through a central pupil reception. A system at this point saves lost learning time later.
- Attendance is the rallying cry at the start of each school day. How many year 11's are absent, who is phoning home, who is late, who follows this up. By 9am a clear list of year 11 absentees should be known to the Head and senior team with clear follow up actions outlined.
- Non-teaching pastoral staff need to be in the corridors, walking into every lesson through a structured timetable to ensure 'corridors are like ghost ships'.
- SLT learning walk timetable is established which is consistent and covers every timetabled period in the school. A member of SLT (the Head) needs to own this timetable and follow up when it is not followed.
- SLT / middle leaders avoid making meetings in the school day as far as is reasonably possible - they need to be out and about owning behaviour and instilling confidence in others making year 11 visits a priority.

Culture of excellence for staff

Staff attendance is high because they teach in a disruption and distraction free environment with effective centralised systems ie: homework detention and support from their leaders at all levels. Staff absence should be monitored through a senior member of staff and early support provided.

Year 11 are never covered by supply teachers but either specialist staff within the school or senior staff are used. Therefore, staff requesting to attend courses or training would ensure this did not impact on Year 11 classes.

The most appropriate member of staff is teaching the right set. Heads, rather than Heads of Department should decide who teaches each set as the Head can be objective and ensures consistency between each department. It



never give up on pupil grades. If you band year 11, are your best teachers teaching on both sides of the timetable? For example, your best maths teacher teaching set 3 on both sides (saving time on planning and influencing outcomes for the greatest number of students). Think about set numbers and optimising key marginal pupil group numbers to maximise impact.

Morning tutor time needs to be utilised for English and maths catch up. The set 3 year 11 English teacher for example needs the students they teach in front of them for every form time session (over two hours additional teaching time a week is available through this strategy).

A member of SLT visits every Year 11 lesson every day. The Head oversees data meetings and meets with the VP standards, Hear of Year 11 and Heads of Maths, English, Science on a half termly basis continually looking at the Venn diagram and key students.

Quality of teaching is paramount- curriculum sequencing (pace plans), challenge, planning, feedback, alignment with the syllabus is all very important. Departments must be given as much planning time as possible and effective line management is critical.

All schemes of work and sketched out lesson plans have been written for Year 11 and matched against time available to ensure everything is covered before February half term. Pacing plans must be in place to support revision and exam strategy as we approach the summer exam series.

Exam preparation

- Exams and assessments are taken very seriously. Pupils have revision books and revision timetables for all exams (internal and external).
- There is a parents meeting at the beginning of Year 11 and another one after the mocks. Parents are quite clear about their role and have accurate data on their child.
- Frequent formative assessments and regular summative assessments ensure there is plenty of exam practice. Some schools have fortnightly timed part exams after school in core subjects. These are marked and returned promptly. Marks are displayed and rank ordered. These assessments matter – they are taken seriously by pupils and teachers.
- Mocks have external invigilators to ensure staff can utilise their time best. All SLT are signed up as invigilators in case additional exam rooms are needed due to specific pupil needs or a lack of invigilators in the main hall.
- We would not advise ‘paying’ external markers to mark year 11 mock exams. Make time for your staff to do this as the ‘real power’ in a mock is the learning / misconceptions picked up by the teacher and subsequent planning / re-teach opportunities this presents.
- Any pupils absent for any exams do them as soon as possible so 100% of pupils are in the data.
- Pupils are aware of what grades are needed for progression to different pathways.
- A member of senior staff and even better the Head attends every exam. In mocks this is proactive ensuring pupils continue to write, although in the actual exam this serves as a point of reassurance or a metaphorical reminder of the role they played in the mocks. Don’t spend 5 years building relationships and trust to then send year 11 into a hall full of strangers.
- Any pupil who ‘gives up’ in the exam hall should be followed up a phone call home by a senior member of staff – making parents/cares aware of pupils’ behaviour in exams is something many schools do not spend long enough doing.
- The Head meets every Year 11 English, maths, and science teacher 1-1 post mocks to support next steps and analyse performance (20-30 minute meeting before or after school).
- Gaining access and downloading exam scripts via appropriate exam boards is recommended. The grade 9 exemplars are particularly useful (focus on model answers).

- Heads of Department work closely with United Learning Subject Advisers, particularly in terms of curriculum planning, revision strategy, mock moderation, results analysis and identifying target groups of pupils for additional support.

The prompts below have been gathered from good practice observed in our schools. They are not presented as the 'perfect' approach to raising standards. As always, a coherent, well-led strategy built on a strong school culture will have more impact than a piecemeal selection of the suggestions below. We encourage Heads to devise their own plan for raising standards before using these prompts to identify any potential gaps.

Culture

- Do you know every Year 11 student by name and circumstance? Is there an accurate awareness of what their attendance is and does the Head / SLT know who is missing school by 9am each morning?
- Does the Head take full ownership of Y11 outcomes?
- Is there a designated 'Raising Standards Leader' or similar on the SLT responsible for Y11 outcomes?
- Have you identified targeted Y11 students to receive mentoring from SLT? Try to keep this mentoring as free from bureaucracy as possible – simply checking in with the mentee in lessons once a day can be more powerful than sitting down together once a week to complete a form.
- Have you identified students at risk of giving up and leaving Y11 with very little to show for their education? Allocate these students to the teacher/leader they are most likely to respond to
- Try and organise the system of 'every member of staff owns a year 11 student' and try to maximise those relationship dynamics.
- Have you got any pupils educated off site? What is their provision / exam preparation / plans looking like. How are they being supported to achieve their best?

ATTENDANCE, ATTENDANCE, ATTENDANCE – any high performing school will make pupil attendance a relentless priority and focus. This is particularly pertinent post lockdown as we see attendance tracking well below pre-pandemic levels. Does the Year 11 SLT Raising Standards Leader line manage the attendance lead? How closely linked is their work?

Use the newly devised United Learning attendance curriculum to ensure Year 11 are the priority. Think 'how does this impact year 11' when planning any attendance strategy.

Communication

- Is there a catchphrase or strapline to galvanise all students and staff? What is your saying for this year? Confidence and belief matters more this year than any other year.
- Have you identified 'banned phrases' e.g. 'grade boundaries are going to be much higher next year', 'you cannot expect us to match 2022 outcomes'. This is going to matter more this year – every child has missed a chunk of education. We need to dismantle each barrier systematically and offer the support needed to seek continuous improvement. However good we are, we can get better.
- Do you use assemblies to reinforce positive messages (remember 'no moaning in assemblies' for Y11). Building confidence and belief is crucial to this year. Reassure them that there is time, they will learn the work, you have put plans in place to enable this to happen. But they have to do their part in this.
- Have you arranged information evenings for parents so that they know how to support their child? Consider a separate information evening for key marginal students led by SLT. Virtual parents' evenings in the summer term, at the start of September will be possible. Information evenings on the plan of action and what the school has done to support all pupils.
- Have you used rewards to incentivise hard work e.g. prom tickets? (Don't remove the incentive before the time is up and use it positively to motivate, not as a threat to punish).
- Have you used 'mock exam results day' to provide students with a sense of success/failure while they can still do something about it?



Lessons

- Does each department have a lesson by lesson breakdown (including gaps for holidays and mocks) to ensure that the curriculum is delivered on time? Does the sequencing of the curriculum support pupils in building their understanding over time? Does the sequencing of the curriculum give priority to the most important things that all pupils need to know?
- Has the school capitalised on the online learning platform for both the school and the UL outward facing student curriculum. Is there a plan for students to access the information after school and at weekends and holidays times? How well are these platforms used (Sparx, Seneca) and who oversees the completion figures (make it someone on SLT).
- How do you ensure that every lesson with Y11 is delivered with urgency and purpose? Can you ensure that a member of SLT visits every Y11 lesson, making eye contact with target students? Does the Head visit year 11 lessons regularly?
- How do you ensure that Y11 lessons involve students working on similar work to the tasks they'll face in their exams rather than discussion/role-play/group-work etc (i.e. work in lessons is the product of students' own thinking, as it will be in their exams)? How much independent practice ('you' phase) is routine in year 11 lessons? How is this being supported as we look to remove scaffolds to prepare pupils for the exams they are about to face?

Departments

- Has each Head of Department thoroughly analysed the previous year's outcomes to look for trends and themes e.g. "what does the PP gap mean in your subject?" "Which papers/questions do your students perform less well in?"
- In each department, who owns Y11 outcomes e.g. who do you go to if you have concerns about lower attainers in Maths?
- Is appropriate attention given to the staffing of each class e.g. same teacher teaching set 3 across both bands of Y11? Is there scope to change staffing if the need arises?
- If you have 'new' year 11 teachers, how are they being supported to ensure outcomes are maximised.
- Is every teacher with a responsibility for Y11 fully familiar with the specification, past papers, and marks schemes, and how do you know this?
- Have you as a school incentivised becoming an examiner for that subject?
- Have you, as Principal, met with every single Y11 teacher to go through their class(es) student by student? Same for HoDs e.g. invite HoDs to SLT meetings on rotation. There is further guidance for this if needed. This should be done after the mocks and possibly after the re-entry for year 10 to ensure that staff are happy and supported in the task ahead.

Curriculum

- Is there any potential to gain time from tutor time or non-examined subjects? Consider your Y11 tutor groups carefully e.g. matching some with English teachers, some with Maths teachers, or grouping all low-P8 students together with a very effective tutor.
- Core PE time: are you able to allocate an English or Maths teacher to core PE time so that they can work with key marginal students (in conjunction with PE department)? Timetabling a member of staff from the start of the academic year gives flexibility here and allows leaders to target pupils throughout the academic year.

Assessment/Data



- Does every student have a clear, challenging, but attainable target grade in each subject?
- Are teachers/leaders aware of whole school targets and their own contribution to these?
- Are teachers/leaders aware of key groups e.g. Pupil Premium, Prior Attainment, Gender and SEND (and/or combinations of these)? Does data for these targeted groups, especially Pupil Premium, 'jump off the page' so that teachers and HoDs can see their own contribution to the outcomes of these groups?
- Do teachers fully understand what you mean by 'predicted' grade? e.g. 'using your professional judgement this is the grade that you expect students to achieve at the end of the year based on, but not limited by, their achievement to date'.
- Is data clear, visible, and high profile, so that teachers and students can quickly identify issues?
- Do you give your students experience of success e.g. through 'walking talking mocks' or 'pre-seen' papers i.e. students given the paper in advance of the mock exam so that they can be held to account and can experience success? These scaffolds can then be gradually removed as exam season approaches.
- Does your tracking of Y11 include information on attendance and behaviour so that patterns for individuals/groups can be spotted? Do you ask teachers for an 'attitude to learning' in each subject and how often are you analysing this data?

Homework/revision

- Do students know how much independent work they are expected to do e.g. at evenings, weekends and in holidays? The intention here is to 'normalise' hard work outside of school. You can then reinforce this through assemblies e.g. "we know that the majority of you are now doing more than two hours of independent work every day"
- Does every student have access to the content for the whole of their course from the start of the year, so that they can review prior learning and preview future learning? This can take the form of knowledge, organisers, revision guides and online resources
- Does every student have somewhere to revise at home? If not, what support can you offer?

Intervention

- How do you ensure that intervention places responsibility on the student e.g. compulsory supervised study sessions after school? Most of our schools provide a daily 'Period 5/6' for Y11 with students allocated to specific classes/teachers based on their individual needs.
- How do you ensure that intervention is targeted and specific rather than just 'more of the same'? Getting the pupils in front of their classroom teacher is often more effective than teachers unfamiliar to the pupils.
- Have you made targeted use of Saturday school or holiday academy where required, and how do you ensure that these sessions are well delivered? If you are relying on goodwill to staff these sessions, consider creative options for repaying this goodwill. Golden ticket time back is popular one, agreed payment to staff for their time another.
- Consider small group/1:1 tutors to maximise progress for key students - sit tutors outside Head's office (and get feedback from students on whether the tutor is good or not).
- Use of the NTP or in-house 1-1 / small group support. Check attendance to these sessions, link them to subject teachers (known learning gaps) and measure impact through set assessment points.
- Have you extended the school day for Year 11? Make it feel different through timetabled after school lesson / intervention. 'Control the controllables'. If you know Year 11 find independent work a challenge at home, mitigate this through before school, after school and during school intervention.

Exam season



- How do you know that appropriate access arrangements are in place? How many year 11 get access to additional time (in some of our independent schools it is close to 35-40% of the cohort). This is crucially important as there were many examples last year when schools were not planning for this additional support.
- With students who will do exams in different rooms, get them used to the room and the scribe / reader that they will have. Make sure that they are happy with the person supporting them. Make sure you check they are working as hard as those in the main hall.
- Train your invigilators well in the culture of the school (make sure they wear trainers for example so the constant noise of shoes is not heard in the exam hall). The Head should touch base with them to ensure that they have seen everyone who is going to be in the exam room with the students. The Head should explain to the invigilators the key role they play in securing pupils the best possible outcomes.
- How can you ensure consistent routines ahead of each exam e.g. same person (Head or senior leader) on the door at the start of each exam?
- Can you ensure that students are comfortable, well-nourished, and made to feel special e.g. free water bottles for Y11; cushions on exam chairs; jelly babies on each exam desk; bananas and energy bars in the morning? Breakfast with top tip sessions, lunch with top tip sessions.
- Check the temperature of the exam room, check the wobbly tables – make sure DT have made lots of table blocks to wedge a wobbly table.
- After each set of exams, sit down with senior invigilator / exam lead and the SLT to do an ‘Even better if .. (EBI) list’.
- If you allocate a member of SLT to each exam, ask them to write up a short report on WWW / EBI and pass to relevant staff (Head, HOD, Senior Line Manager).
- Contact parents of those pupils who have not put maximum effort into the exams set. Explain what needs to change and when the next set of exams are for year 11. On the flip side, contact parents and celebrate the hard work and resilience demonstrated by many pupils through exams.

Year 11 Timeline (day by day, week by week, month by month, term by term)

It is good to have a timeline to ensure that all of the above are covered at the time that will have the most impact. Check, check and check again that people are doing what the timeline says they should be doing

September/October:

- All HoDs have analysed their summer results and adjusted plans for the year ahead accordingly
- Check the right teachers are on the right sets
- Behaviour is exemplary in Year 11 classrooms
- Parents meeting to set the scene – year’s calendar of key dates given out and parents key role clearly explained and the GCSE grading system
- Year 11 assemblies on pathways and grades needed for future careers/aspirations
- Visits by SLT to all Year 11 lessons
- Morning form time is utilised for English and maths additional teaching time (not just an intervention) 20-30 mins a day 4 times a week
- Pupils aware of where they are (Year 10 data) and the journey ahead to achieve their targets
- Year 11 lesson plans in place for the whole year for every subject. The detail can be added but each lesson objective should be clear

November/December:



- Revision booklet for mocks given out with clear notes on each subject
- Mock exam timetable issued to parents and pupils and pupils draw up their own revision timetable on a clear proforma which is signed off by HOY/form tutor
- First predictive data collected. Department moderation time, sign off by HODs and overseen by line managers based on clear criteria such as 80% actual performance - 20% potential
- Mocks overseen by external invigilators and the head or SLT
- All absentees followed up
- Year 11 stay for extra period at least 3 times a week for intensive gap filling
- Use the planned R&S visit from the Regional Director to focus on year 11
- HoDs join United Learning Subject Advisers for mock moderation

January/February

- CPD time devoted to departments moderating results, moderating predictions. These must all be signed off by the Headteacher before being sent to United Learning. Predictions should be based mostly on mocks and partly on potential to improve
- Mock results day. Pupils collect results in a mirror image of actual results in August. Envelopes and desks in the hall
- 1:1 careers meetings for all pupils in Y11. Capture their intended destinations on the Y11 spreadsheet so that teachers and leaders know which grades pupils need in each subject to support their desired next steps
- HoDs work with United Learning Subject Advisers to agree mock response, identify target groups, and ensure that the curriculum remains on track to be delivered on time
- Year 11 parents evening. Very high profile that every parent should attend (face to face should be the preference here as the real power of these evenings is meeting parents 'live' and not on Teams). Schools often draw up a form which is modelled on an exam entry form which parents and teachers sign. This ensures parents see each teacher. Predictions (mock exam results/attendance/behaviour/points all available at this meeting). Pupils causing the most concern see the Head
- New intervention groups drawn up – particular importance must go to pupils getting English not Maths and vice versa. Pupils informed of which group they are in and programme for that half term
- Some year 11 may no longer do core PE and have weekly tests in English/Maths/Science during this time. Exams results marked swiftly and up on the board before the following week
- Check every group to ensure that every student is in the correct group
- Ensure attendance to school remains high priority - who is in charge of this on the senior team and is it checked first thing every day for absentees?
- Early SLT parents evening (collapse a SLT meeting) focussing on a group of pupils (PP, Boys PP, 5+ Key in English or Maths)
- Have control of the Year 11 spreadsheet that has raw mock marks for English and Maths, set, teacher and proposed intervention - set a raw mark target for each student based off the back of the November mock score
- After school intervention timetable to be published weekly. Attendance to these sessions is checked and phone calls home for any pupils that are absent
- Distribute March mock timetable one month in advance and check it mirrors the summer exam in terms of time sat within the school day and position in the exam hall - leave nothing to chance
- Are you planning Feb Half term catch up? - normally effective for any coursework still outstanding in vocational subjects?
- Who is the school's Quality Nominee? Has the coursework been signed off and what more is left to do?
- Year 11 Mentoring Programme - are the key students being mentored and supported by staff? What does this look like?
- Check morning tutor groups - are the key marginal students with their English and maths teacher for morning form time everyday?



- Every year 11 assembly should be led by the Head and setting the tone for the next 12-14 weeks pre GCSE exams - make the year group realise how much you care as a Head
- Friday phone calls - every year 11 teacher makes 3 Friday phone calls to share successes with 3 parents - build the culture as we move towards the summer exams
- Any year 11 absentee should be making up the time (even for illness) - make this a positive and organise appropriate support after school when they return
- Head meets every English and maths year 11 teacher to set a raw mark March mock target based off the back of the November mocks (a 10-15 raw mark gain is entirely achievable between now and March)
- Check cover for Year 11 lessons every day and never let a cover teacher teach them - find a member of staff in the school teaching a different year group in the same subject and move them in
- The March mocks need to follow the summer series in every aspect. Time, day, seat, pre revision should all match the summer exams

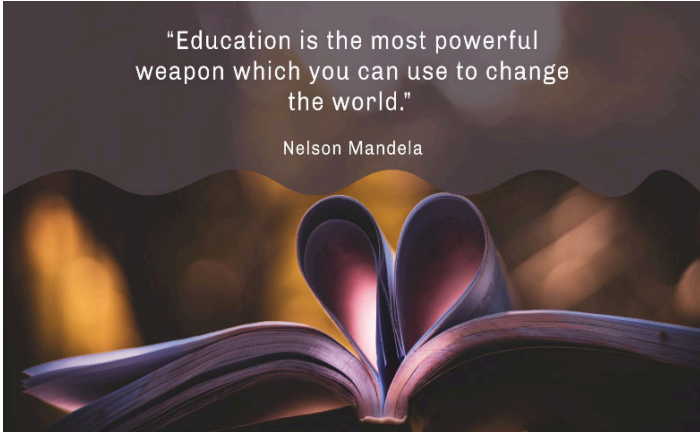
March/April/May

- SLT parents evening run again with key marginal student groups and parents
- New set of mocks and predicted grades in English and Maths
- New intervention groups drawn up – particular importance must go to pupils getting English not Maths and vice versa. Pupils informed of which group they are in and programme for that half term
- Review mentoring programme with key students
- Which students are potential absentees from summer exams or may struggle to get to all exams on time? Devise bespoke plans for these students
- Exam priority list - name the thirty most vulnerable students and assign someone on the staff to be in charge of getting them into school
- Easter Revision Programme - work out what this will look like and target English, maths, and science in particular for additional booster support
- Revision booklets created for subjects and students to support GCSE revision
- Meet every year 11 teacher as a Head and ask what else the school could be doing to support them in the last push for success
- No study leave - when students start finishing courses (voc ed courses) have a bespoke plan for each and every student. Where do they go, what do they do? When the summer exams start, do the same again to maximise any time left for subjects that fall at the end of the exam window. When an exam finishes, what happens next? Have a plan and over communicate the plan
- Plan entry and exit routines into the summer exams - this needs to be carefully scripted and not left to chance - what lessons have been learnt from the mocks

June/July

- Recognise the achievement of the cohort – how do you celebrate this?
- How do you maintain maximum motivation during the exam window – phone calls home, positive postcards, ice-cream vans, pizza afternoons have all been used by schools in the past
- Are staff accessing the GCSE papers (when permitted to do so) and planning revision for the next paper?
- Random acts of kindness are a lovely way to maintain pupil and staff motivation (whether that is food, an event, a thank you) – make people feel cared and appreciated during this stressful period
- Invite parents in during the exam window for an update evening – what is going well, what more could they do to help and support their son/daughter?
- Talk to year 10 about what year 11 are doing and how much success they are having / effort needed to succeed
- ‘Push the positive’ – this is not the time to tell pupils ‘I told you to work harder after the mocks and you did not listen’. Now is the time to maintain enthusiasm which will maintain effort and commitment





“Education is the most powerful
weapon which you can use to change
the world.”

Nelson Mandela

Secondary Education Team

September 2023



United Learning
The best in everyone™

■ Ambition ■ Confidence ■ Creativity ■ Respect ■ Enthusiasm ■ Determination