



Key Stage 3

Examination Guidance January 2026

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Examination Preparation: Tips for Parents

1. Encourage Retrieval Practice (Active Recall)

What it is: Instead of rereading notes, pupils test what they can remember *from memory*.

How parents can help:

- Ask your child to close their book and explain what they just learned.
- Use **flashcards** or **quizzes**, apps like Quizlet or paper cards work well.
- Have “mini-tests” where your child recalls key points without looking.

Why it works: Actively recalling information strengthens memory and makes it easier to retrieve later in exams.

2. Use Spaced Practice

What it is: Revisiting topics regularly over time instead of cramming.

How parents can help:

- Encourage a revision timetable that revisits topics after a few days, then a week, then two weeks.
- Mix old and new topics in each session (“interleaving”).

Why it works: Spacing helps information move from short-term to long-term memory and keeps earlier learning fresh.

3. Support Active Note-Making

What it is: Turning information into something meaningful, not just copying.

How parents can help:

- Encourage pupils to summarise notes in their own words.
- Create mind maps, diagrams, or “one-page summaries.”

- Ask them to teach the topic back to you

Why it works: Organising and explaining ideas deepens understanding.

4. Build in Short, Focused Sessions

What it is: Working in chunks of 25–30 minutes with breaks.

How parents can help:

- Encourage a quiet, distraction-free study space.
- Set timers and reward focused work with short breaks.

Why it works: Short sessions maintain concentration and reduce overwhelm.

5. Foster a Positive Routine & Mindset

What it is: Making revision feel manageable and part of everyday life.

How parents can help:

- Praise effort, not just results (“You worked really hard on that quiz”).
- Help set realistic goals for each session.
- Balance revision with rest, exercise, and hobbies.

Why it works: Confidence and consistency are key for long-term motivation.

Year 8

In Year 8, 80% of the final mark will be from the examination and 20% of the will be from two standardised assessment tasks/tests.

Art

The January exam mark is based on all work completed in term 1.

40% - drawing/painting/experimental presentation based on apples

Core assessment 1 - 20% written and illustrated 'Seven elements of Art' task on iPad

Core assessment 2 - 30% textile art

Observation homework - 10%

Biology

Exam time is 30 minutes with a range of short answer and longer extended questions based on the topics of Cells and Life Processes and Animal Reproduction.

Students are reminded to use their paper booklet and the eBook that is on WHSCampus, for their revision of each topic.

A 30cm ruler, calculator, pens and pencils will be required to complete the examination.

The January report mark will be based on the examination result (80%) and the following core assessments : Cells storyboard task (onion slide) (10%), Cells formal homework (5%) and Cells end of topic test (5%).

Chemistry

The Chemistry examination is 30 minutes. The examination paper will consist of short answer recall and application questions. Pupils will be required to answer questions on the topics:

- Getting Started,
- Chemical Changes
- Acids and Alkalis

Pupils will be expected to recognise simple apparatus and draw graphs.

Pupils should bring pens, pencils, and a ruler to the examination. Two Core Assessments completed during the term will contribute 20% towards the final report mark. The written examination paper will contribute 80%.

Drama

In this 30-minute examination pupils will undertake a series of questions based on gesture, staging, the history of theatre, roles and responsibilities and theatres around us. They will also reflect on skills developed in Term One.

Pupils' Core Tasks (20%) and performance skills (30%) will also be assessed.

English

The examination will last 1 hour and will contain two sections:

- a Persuasive Writing
- b Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. Multiple choice questions.

Core Tasks will also form 20% of the final mark awarded and 20% of the final mark will come from Talking and Listening assessments.

French

Listening examinations will be held in class during the week beginning the 5th of January (pupils will be notified in advance of the precise date for their class examination).

The written paper (45 minutes duration) will involve reading, writing and grammar exercises. Examination content is as follows:

Alphabet

Numbers 1-31

Months & Dates

Classroom items

Giving personal information

Places in town & town description

Festivals

Where we live

Opinions about where we live and why

Grammar & Writing

Grammar- A/Some/The/prepositions

Oral questions & answers from booklets 1-3

The revision list will also be emailed to pupils and will be available on WHS Campus and Google Classroom. There will be no oral examination at this

stage of the year. However, pupils must learn all the answers to their oral questions from their booklets as the writing tasks will be based on these.

A Core Unit Test (10%) and Core ICT task (10%) will form 20% of the final examination result.

Geography

The examination will be one hour long, and answers will involve one-word answers, definitions, and longer more detailed responses. Pupils may be asked to draw diagrams and interpret maps and cartoons. The paper is worth 80% of the marks available and this will be added to the marks for the Core Assessment tests (20%).

Topics to be examined are 'What is Geography?', Geography in the News, Settlement and OS Map Work. There will be a Northern Ireland focus to all of the questions.

All pupils need to ensure they have colouring pencils, calculators and other items included in the equipment list given at the beginning of term. Additional revision advice will be available on WHS Campus.

History

The paper is split into 3 sections. This includes factual knowledge, source work and extended writing.

Pupils need to revise:

- Chronology – putting dates in order and into centuries.
- Definitions – what is Primary and Secondary evidence, bias and anachronism and pupils should be able to give examples.

Students should revise their source work skills making use of the source work writing frame located in their class notebooks. There is also an electronic version on WHSCampus.

Pupils need to know about who the Normans were, the contenders for the English throne and their claims to the crown, as well as the events of 1066 including the Battles of Stamford Bridge and Hastings.

The marks from the examination will be added to the two core assessments already completed to give an overall percentage out of 100.

Home Economics

The exam paper is 30 minutes in length and will examine all work covered since the beginning of September. Pupils are provided with a list of topics covered. The paper is worth 80% of the marks available and this will be added to the marks for a Core Assessment test (10%) and a practical examination completed during class time (10%).

Mathematics

The examination is based on the work covered this year. Lists of topics together with revision material and all the classwork used are available digitally on WHS Campus. Pupils will sit a one-hour examination which is non-calculator. This will account for 80% of their report percentage as 20% of standardised assessment has already been completed during the year.

Music

The test is made up of a written aural exam, lasting 30 minutes. Pupils will be examined on the Elements of Music.

A further 20% consists of a performance exam taken in class time. 30% is a composition task in GarageBand, also undertaken in class time.

Physics

The exam paper is thirty minutes in length and will consist of short answer recall and application questions. There is a detailed revision list on WHScampus, worksheets and an ebook.

- Forces
- Mass & Volume
- Density
- Energy & Resources
- Speed

The students are expected to have a calculator, ruler and pencil with them.

Religious Studies

Students should learn the topics covered in Term 1 of Religious Studies on Abrahamic Faiths. This includes knowledge and understanding of the key beliefs and practices within Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Students must also revise the similarities, differences, and shared history of the three faiths.

Pupils will be expected to understand the Christian story of the birth of Jesus. This will include the role of the angels, shepherds and Magi (Wise Men). Pupils will also be expected to understand the term 'refugee' and reasons why a person may be known as a refugee in the modern world.

The examination will last 30 minutes. Their examination will account for 80% of their overall grade, and the remaining 20% being taken from their Core (in class) assessment.

Technology

Mid-Year assessment will be based on a 30-minute exam (40%), written coursework (30%) and a practical (30%). The exam is to be based on work covered this year – health and safety, graphics, materials and workshop processes.

Year 9

Art

The January exam mark is based on all work completed in term 1.

Core assessment 1- 40% - 'Perspective' observations - drawing/painting/experimental studies and research.

Core assessment 2 - 50% - Graphic design task using ArtStudio on iPad

Observation homework - 10%

Biology

Exam time is 30 minutes with a range of short answer and longer extended questions based on the topics of Diet & Digestion and Respiration.

Students are reminded to use their paper booklet and the eBook that is on WHSCampus for their revision of each topic.

A 30cm ruler, calculator, pens and pencils will be required to complete the examination.

The January report mark will be based on the examination result (80%) and the following core assessments: Food Test storyboard (10%), Diet & Digestion formal homework (5%) and Diet & Digestion end of topic test (5%)

Chemistry

The Chemistry examination is 30 minutes. The examination paper will consist of short answer recall and application questions. Pupils will be required to answer questions on

- Atomic Structure
- Elements, Compounds and Mixtures
- Reactions

Two core Assessments during the term will contribute to the final overall mark (20%). The written examination paper will contribute 80%.

Pupils should bring pens, pencils and a calculator to the examination.

English

The examination will last 1 hour and will contain two sections:

A -Writing : Pupils will write the opening of a short story based on a visual stimulus.

B - Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar. Multiple choice questions.

Core Tasks will form 20% of the final mark awarded. 20% of the final mark will come from Talking and Listening assessments.

Geography

The examination will be one hour long, and answers will involve one word responses, definitions, and longer more detailed answers. Pupils may be asked to draw diagrams and interpret maps and cartoons.

The paper is worth 80% of the marks available and this will be added to the marks for the Core Assessment tests (20%).

Topics to be examined are the European Union and Rivers (processes, landforms and flooding). There will also be a 'Geography in the News' question. There will be a European focus to all of the questions. Pupils will also need to revise OS map skills.

All pupils need to ensure they have colouring pencils, calculators and other items included in the equipment list given at the beginning of term. Additional revision advice will be available on WHS Campus.

History

The paper is split into 3 sections. This includes factual knowledge, source work and extended writing.

Pupils need to revise:

- The Reformation – reasons for and results, the reformers.
- Henry VIII – wives and children.
- Mary, Queen of Scots – her life story, the murder of Rizzio, her part in plots against Elizabeth, the reasons for her execution, results of her execution.
- The Armada – reasons for it being sent, reasons for failure.
- Students should revise their source work skills making use of the source work writing frame located in their class notebooks. There is also an electronic version on WHS Campus.

The marks from the examination will be added to the two core assessments already completed to give an overall percentage out of 100.

Home Economics

The exam paper is 30 minutes in length and will examine all work covered since the beginning of September. The paper is worth 80% of the marks available for this subject.

A Core Assessment test contributes a further 10% of the marks.

A practical examination completed during class time is worth 10% of their final result. Pupils are given a list of topics covered since September.

Mathematics

The examination is based on the work covered this year. Lists of topics together with revision material and all the classwork used so far are available digitally on WHS Campus.

Pupils will sit a one-hour paper and are expected to have their own calculator for use in the examination.

This will account for 80% of their report percentage as 20% of standardised assessment has already been completed during the year.

Modern Languages

French, German and Spanish

Listening examinations will be held in class during the week beginning the 5th of January (pupils will be notified in advance of the precise date for their class examination).

The written paper (45 minutes duration) will involve reading, writing and grammar exercises. Examination content is as follows:

French	German	Spanish
School subjects	Greetings	Greetings
Opinions on subjects	Numbers 0-31	The Spanish Alphabet
School uniform	Days, months and seasons	Numbers 0-31
Time	Classroom items from Unit 1	Age/birthdays
A typical school day (in France and NI)	Colours	Dates (including days and months)
Daily routine	Animals	Classroom Items
Describing the school building	Members of family	Classroom Instructions
Jobs and future careers	Adjectives to describe size and personality	Where we live
Countries and holiday destinations	Grammar and Writing	Countries
Asking for and giving directions	Know how to use the three words for the (der, die, das), a (ein, eine, ein) and it (er, sie and es)	Nationalities
Grammar and Writing	Know how to use the accusative indefinite article (a) zum Beispiel:	Languages
Regular er verbs	Ich habe <u>einen</u> Fisch / <u>eine</u> Schlange / <u>ein</u> Pferd	Basic personal questions and answers
Adjectives and adjective agreement	Regular verbs in the present tense	Grammar & Writing
Reflexive verbs	haben to have and sein to be	Gender of nouns
Aller (to go)	Oral questions from units 1&2	Making nouns plural
Prepositions (inc. à / au / en / aux)		A/ some (un/ una/ unos/ unas)
Oral questions from booklet 1 and 2		The (el/ la/ los/ las)
		Tener – Tengo/ no tengo
		AR, ER and IR verbs
		Oral questions from booklets 1-3

The revision lists will be emailed to pupils and will also be available on WHS Campus and Google Classroom. There will be no oral examination at this stage of the year. However, pupils must learn all the answers to their oral

questions from their booklets as the writing tasks will be based on these.

In French, a Core Unit Test (10%) and Core ICT task (10%) will form 20% of the final examination result.

Music

The examination is a 30-minute paper. Pupils are examined on The Elements of Music and must respond critically to excerpts of Television and Advertising music. Revision aids can be found in the iBook TV themes and adverts in WHSCampus.

A further 20% consists of a performance exam taken in class time. 30% is a composition task in GarageBand, also undertaken in class time.

Physics

The 30 minute test will include short format questions to test recall, knowledge and application of the following topics which have been studied since September in Topic 1 and 2 booklets. Students are expected to have a calculator, ruler and pencil with them. There is a detailed revision list on WHScampus, plus worksheets and an ebook.

- The eye
- Reflection
- Refraction
- Lenses
- Dispersion
- Electromagnetic Spectrum
- Static Electricity
- Circuit Symbols
- Series Circuits
- Parallel Circuits
- Electromagnets

Religious Studies

Students should learn the topics covered in Term 1 of Religious Studies on Church History. This includes knowledge and understanding of the key events that spanned from The Crucifixion of Jesus up to The Reformation. Students must understand all key events covered and be able to compare which events have had the largest impact on the creation of the Christian Church that we now know in 2025.

Key terms learnt throughout the year will be included within the assessment. Persecution and its impact on Christians will be a distinctive theme within the examination also. Students are encouraged to pay particular attention to the life of St Paul.

The examination will last 30 minutes. The examination will account for 80% of their overall grade, and the remaining 20% being taken from their Core (in class) assessment.

Technology

Mid-Year assessment will be based on a 30-minute exam (40%), written coursework (30%) and a practical (30%).

The exam is to be based on work covered this year – health and safety, graphics, mechanisms, materials and workshop processes. Pupils should also understand the work covered in Year 8 – this knowledge provides the essential building blocks required to give an overall understanding of Technology.

Year 10

Art

The January exam mark is based on all work completed in term 1.

Core assessment 1 : 40% - 'Hands' observations - pencil, colour and experimental studies and research.

Core assessment 2 : 60% - Creative careers project which includes written research, drawing and experimental presentation techniques.

Biology

Exam time is 45 minutes and includes a range of short answer and longer extended questions based on the topics of Blood & Circulation and Microbes: Defence against Disease.

Students are reminded to use their paper companion booklet and the eBook that is on WHSCampus for their revision of each topic.

A 30cm ruler, calculator, pencils and pen will be required to complete the questions.

The January report mark will be based on the examination result (80%) and the following core assessments :Blood Fact Files (10%), Circulation formal homework (5%) and Circulation end of topic test (5%).

Chemistry

The Chemistry examination is 45 minutes. The examination paper will consist of short answer recall and application questions.

Pupils will be required to answer questions on

- Neutralisation
- GCSE Atomic Structure
- Bonding (part of)

Pupils should bring pens, pencils and a calculator to the examination.

Two Core Assessments completed during this term will be used to contribute 20% of the January report mark. The written examination paper will contribute 80%.

English

The examination which lasts for one hour, fifteen minutes will focus on GB Shaw's "Pygmalion". Pupils will answer a series of analytical questions which focus on staging and characterisation, before completing a creative writing task based on the play.

Two Core Tasks will also form 20% of the final mark awarded. 20% of the final mark comes from Talking and Listening assessments.

Geography

The examination will be one hour long and answers will involve one-word answers, definitions, and longer more detailed answers. Pupils will be asked to apply their knowledge to different situations and case studies.

Pupils may be asked to draw diagrams and interpret maps and cartoons. The paper is worth 80% of the marks available and this will be added to the marks for the Core Assessment tests (20%).

Topics to be examined are Plate Tectonics (to include earthquakes and volcanoes and the relevant case studies) as well as Development Indicators. There will also be a 'Geography in the News' question. Each question will have a global focus. Pupils will need to prepare for the use of geo-maths skills.

All pupils need to ensure they have colouring pencils, calculators and other items included in the equipment list given at the beginning of term. Additional revision advice will be available on WHS Campus.

History

The paper is split into 3 sections. This includes factual knowledge, source work and extended writing.

Pupils need to know:

World War One – the alliance system, rivalry between the powers, the rivalry over the Balkans, trench warfare – what a trench was like, conditions for soldiers (vermin, food, weather and dangers).

The Holocaust- the Nazi attitudes towards the Jews as well as other social/ ethnic groups. This will also include Nazi policies towards the Jews and other social/ ethnic groups during WW2.

Students should revise their source work skills making use of the source work writing frame located in their class notebooks. There is also an electronic version on WHS Campus.

The marks from the examination will be added to the two core assessments already completed to give an overall percentage out of 100.

Home Economics

The exam paper is 30 minutes in length and will examine all work covered since the beginning of September. The paper is worth 80% of the marks available for this subject. A practical examination completed during class time is worth 10% of their final result and a Core Assessment test contributes a further 10% of their marks. Pupils are given a list of topics covered since September.

Mathematics

The examination is based on the work covered this year. Lists of topics together with revision material and all the classwork used so far this year are available digitally on WHS Campus.

Pupils will sit a one-hour paper and are expected to have their own calculator for use in the examination. This will account for 80% of their report percentage as 20% of standardised assessment has already been completed during the year.

Modern Languages

French, German and Spanish

Listening examinations will be held in class during the week beginning the 5th of January (pupils will be notified in advance of the precise date for their class examination).

The written paper (1 hour duration) will involve reading, writing and grammar exercises. Examination content is as follow:

French	German	Spanish
Countries/holiday destinations	Food and drinks	Booklet 1 - all school related vocabulary
holiday activities	Food and drink likes and dislikes	Booklet 2
Holiday disasters	Hobbies	House types
festivals	TV Programmes and opinions	Locations
Typical foods	Time Vocab	Rooms

Countries/holiday destinations	Countries	Bedroom items
holiday activities	Places in the town	Colours
opinions	Modes of transport	Places in the town
Holiday disasters	Weather expressions	High street shops
Festivals	Grammar and Writing	Clothes
Food and quantities	Verbs in present tense (regular and irregular)	Directions
Typical foods	Word order rules (Time Manner Place and verb second idea in phrase)	Grammar & Writing
Grammar & Writing	Indefinite article in the accusative case (e.g. es gibt einen alten Bahnhof)	Prepositions
Present tense	Adjectives and how to use them	Del/de la
Perfect tense	zum / zur (zu + dative)	Adjectival agreement
The partitive article – some	Wenn clauses (verb, comma, verb)	Ir – to go
Vouloir – to wish/want	Oral questions from units 1-3	al/ a la
Oral questions - booklet 1 and Q1&2 from booklet 2		Giving opinions
		Oral questions from booklet 2 (My town)

The revision lists will also be emailed to pupils and will be available on WHS Campus and Google Classroom. There will be no oral examination at this stage of the year. However, pupils must learn all the answers to their oral questions from their booklets as the writing tasks will be based on these.

Pupils' target for the grammar and writing section of the paper is 50%. A subject support session will be held after school for any student that does not achieve this target.

In French, a Core Unit Test (10%) and Core ICT task (10%) will form 20% of the final examination result.

Music

The examination is a 30-minute paper. Pupils are examined on The Elements of Music and must respond critically to excerpts of Television and Advertising music. Revision aids can be found in the iBook TV themes and adverts in WHSCampus.

A further 20% consists of a performance exam taken in class time. 30% is a composition task in GarageBand, also undertaken in class time.

Physics

The 45 minute test will include short format questions to test recall, knowledge and application of the following topics which have been studied since September - Topic 1, 2 & 3 workbooks.

There is a detailed revision list on WHScampus, worksheets and an ebook. The students are expected to bring a calculator, ruler and pencil to the exam.

- Motion - speed equation
- Motion graphs (distance:time & speed:time)
(calculate speed, rate of change of speed and distance)
- Levers and Moments
- Gears
- Pulleys
- Electrical circuits (voltage and current)

Religious Studies

Students should revise the topics covered in Term 1 of Religious Studies on Social Justice. This includes knowledge and understanding around key terms and specific groups in society who have historically or are currently facing injustice, as well as Church teachings on the importance of striving for social justice.

Students should pay close attention to 'poverty' within the world, identifying types and reasons why people may experience a particular type of poverty and be able to identify charities, both Christian and humanitarian, who help people experiencing prejudice and discrimination in the world today, but in particular, in the UK.

The examination will last 30 minutes and will be the sole basis of their January grade.

Technology

Mid-Year assessment will be based on a 45-minute exam (60%), written coursework (20%) and a practical (20%).

The exam is to be based on work covered this year – Health and Safety, graphics, electronics (potential dividers based round sensing components, resistors, transistors, output components), materials and workshop processes.

Pupils should also understand work covered in Years 8 and 9 – this knowledge provides the essential building blocks required for an overall understanding of Technology.