

Grading new GCSEs from 2017

New grading structure	Current grading structure
9	A*
8	A
7	A
6	B
5	B
4	C
3	D
2	E
1	F
U	G
U	U

GOOD PASS (DfE)
5 and above = top of C and above

AWARDING
4 and above = bottom of C and above



The GCSE grading system



Maximising performance in year 11

16 September 2026

Subject information
Pillars of success
Revision techniques



2026 Exam Results Overview

% of all grades 4+ : 71%

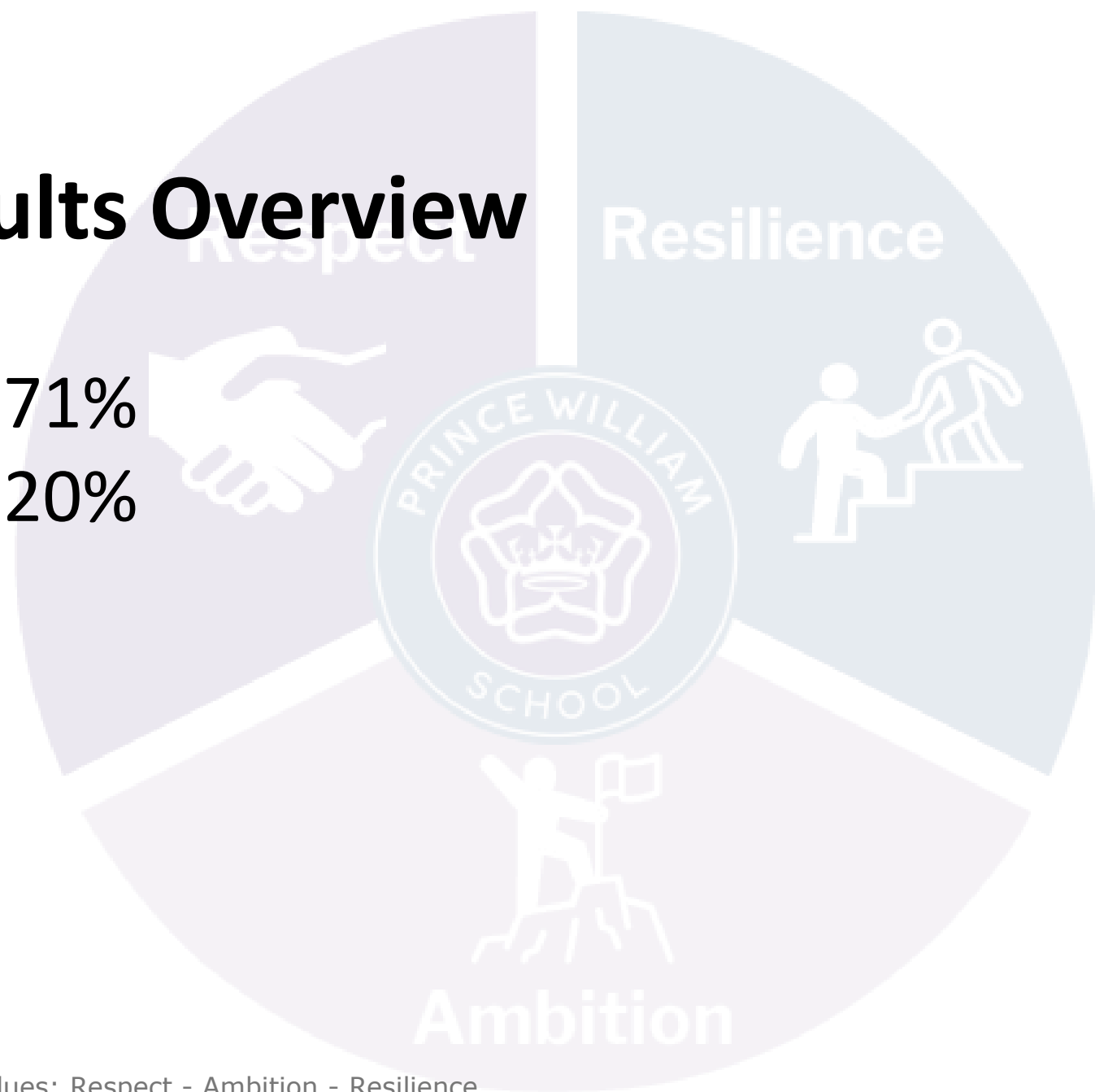
% of all grades 7+ : 20%

Grade 4 +:

English 82%

Maths 70%

Science 64%





Key dates for year 11

25 September – revision techniques session
15 October – apprenticeships roadshow
15 October – reports to parents
19 October to 13 November – year 11 mocks
19 November – Year 11 options evening
1 December – mock results event
11 December – reports to parents and parents' evening
18 January to 31 January - mocks
18 March – reports to parents
4 May – GCSE exams start
19 August – results day



Key people

- Tutor – subject teachers/leaders who are using tutor time for revisions and learning
- Head of Year 11 – Mr Guest
- Head of English – Mrs Field
- Head of Maths – Mr Alisauskas
- Head of Science – Mrs Melrose
- Deputy Head Teacher (data) – Mr S Woodhouse
- Deputy Head Teacher (inclusion) – Mr A Kennedy
- Careers Advisor – Ms Allen



GCSE English: Edexcel

- All students will complete **GCSE English Language** and follow one of two possible specifications. Both routes are assessed 9-1 and carry equal weighting with further and higher education establishments. The difference is seen in the formatting of tasks and the style of texts.
- All students will complete the **Spoken Language Endorsement** regardless of which route they follow for English Language. The format and assessment criteria is identical.
- All students will complete **GCSE English Literature**.
- **There is no tiered entry for GCSE English.**



GCSE English Language: Edexcel (Traditional Spec)

Paper 1: 19th Century Fiction and Imaginative Writing (40%)

SECTION A: Students examine an extract from an unseen 19th Century novel. They must respond to a range of tasks that are based on the skills of inference, analysis, and evaluation

SECTION B: Students produce an extended creative response to prompts or images and will be judged on their ability to structure and craft language with sophistication and accuracy.

Paper 2: 20th and 21st Century Non-fiction and Transactional Writing (60%)

SECTION A: Students examine two 20th and 21st century non-fiction texts across a range of forms such as, letters, articles, reports, websites or diary entries.

SECTION B: They then produce an extended transactional response to one of two tasks that takes its themes from the Section A texts.

Students are judged on their ability to structure and craft language in varied ways with sophistication and accuracy but with additional focus on writing for a specific audience and purpose.



GCSE English Language: Edexcel (2.0 Spec)

Paper 1: Non-Fiction Texts (50%)

- **SECTION A:** Students examine a range of non-fiction 19th Century texts and develop their analytical and evaluative reading skills.
- **SECTION B:** Students have a choice of two transactional writing tasks, thematically linked to the texts in Section A. Accuracy, sophistry and variety with spelling, punctuation and grammar is assessed in this task.

Paper 2: Contemporary Texts (50%)

- **SECTION A:** Students examine two 20th and 21st century prose fiction and literary non-fiction. Students will respond to a range short and open response questions on two thematically linked unseen extracts.
- **SECTION B:** Students produce an extended imaginative response to one of two tasks that takes its themes from the Section A texts. Students will be judged on their ability to structure and craft language in varied ways with sophistication and accuracy.



GCSE English Language: Spoken Language Endorsement

All students are required to complete the Spoken Language Endorsement (SLE). This is common across all GCSE exam boards and students have to do it.

The SLE does not carry any weight toward the overall qualification. Students research, plan and deliver a short (4-5 minutes) presentation on an appropriate, and mutually agreed, topic. They must answer questions posed at the end of their presentation. Students are judged on their ability to speak with clarity, order and sophistication. They will also be judged on the depth and challenge of their responses to questions posed.

Students be awarded a Pass, Merit or Distinction for their efforts. All students will deliver their presentation to their class. Teachers will record presentations from selected students as evidence to send to the exam board.



GCSE English Literature: Edexcel

Paper 1: Shakespeare and Post 1914 Literature (50%)

"Romeo and Juliet"

They first answer one extract based task and then a second task that focuses on the thematic issues raised in the extract, as they can be evidenced throughout the play as a whole. They will also be expected to comment on the relationship between the play and the context(s) in which it was written and performed.

"An Inspector Calls"

Students will be given a choice of two tasks that are based on key elements plot, theme and character. Their response should examine such elements closely as well as make links to the context(s) in which the play was set, written and performed. Students will also be awarded a mark for the quality of the written communication.

Paper 2: 19th Century Novel and Poetry since 1789 (50%)

"A Christmas Carol"

Students study the 19th Century text "A Christmas Carol". Students complete a two part task: one with an extract and one that examines the whole text.

"Belonging" Poetry

- Students work in their Edexcel Poetry Anthology. We focus on a range of literary devices as well as the context of each poem. In the exam students are given one of the poems studied and asked to compare it, based on a thematic steer, to one of the other poems studied.

Unseen Poetry

Students will be given two unseen poems and are asked to compare how a specific element, usually content based or a thematic idea.

Both exams are closed book – students will not have full copies of the set texts with them in the exams.



English Revision Tips

- Read widely – including some 19th century texts
- Expand your vocabulary
- Past Papers
- Get to know the criteria
- Talk to your teachers
- Take detailed notes in all lessons and respond to all feedback
- Attend the revision sessions recommended to you



GCSE Mathematics: AQA 8300

Paper 1: non-calculator
What's assessed
Content from any part of the specification may be assessed
How it's assessed
• written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • non-calculator • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment
Questions
A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.

+

Paper 2: calculator
What's assessed
Content from any part of the specification may be assessed
How it's assessed
• written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • calculator allowed • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment
Questions
A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.

+

Paper 3: calculator
What's assessed
Content from any part of the specification may be assessed
How it's assessed
• written exam: 1 hour 30 minutes • 80 marks • calculator allowed • 33⅓% of the GCSE Mathematics assessment
Questions
A mix of question styles, from short, single-mark questions to multi-step problems. The mathematical demand increases as a student progresses through the paper.



Maths tiers

Foundation **Grades 1 to 5**

Higher **Grades 3 to 9**

Topic Area	Foundation Tier (%)	Higher Tier (%)
Number	25	15
Algebra	20	30
Ratio	25	20
Geometry	15	20
Probability and statistics (combined)	15	15

MATHS
AFTER SCHOOL INTERVENTION

AIMING FOR GRADE 5

GAIN CONFIDENCE!
Work through questions and past papers.

Led by: Mrs Turner

WHO is it for? Suitable for students currently working below a Grade 5.

WHAT we do: Work through exam questions and past papers to gain confidence!

Join us!
WHEN: EVERY TUESDAY, 3:30 PM
WHERE: ROOM M6

Intervention sessions

There are currently 2 different after school intervention sessions that are running in maths. We highly recommend that students attend these.

They will have the opportunity to improve their maths skills in a calm, quiet and purposeful environment.

They will have a teacher to guide them. Sessions are being run by Mr Alisauskas and Mrs Turner.

Parents must sign students up for these sessions on Arbor.

For most impact we encourage students to attend every session. Skipping sessions will not lead to sustained results.

MATHS
AFTER SCHOOL INTERVENTION

AIMING FOR GRADE 7+

SECURE THE HIGH GRADES!
Tackle the most challenging content.

Led by: Mr Alisauskas (Head of Maths)

WHO is it for? Suitable for students currently working at Grade 5+

WHAT we do: Working through the most challenging topics to secure your top grade!

Join us!
WHEN: EVERY TUESDAY, 3:30 PM
WHERE: ROOM M5



How to be successful in Maths

Ensure you have a revision guide which you are using – AQA exam board.

Practice little and often – every day for 20 mins is perfect.

Complete all homework set.

Attend intervention sessions offered by the maths department (Tuesday after school – parents to sign up on Arbor).

Work on the things you know you can't do.

Complete one past paper in exam conditions every 2-3 weeks.

Bring all equipment to every lesson which includes a calculator, compass, ruler and a protractor.



Useful resources

- Students have access to Sparx which they should be using regularly. Some of their homework will be set on Sparx, but they also have the option to work on topics independently. They can complete questions and watch videos that can guide them through all topics at Higher and Foundation.
- CorbettMaths website – free revision videos with corresponding worksheets and examination questions. Also the famous 5-a-day worksheet where students get to complete 5 questions each day.
- 1st class maths website – has videos, worksheets, practice papers and past papers.
- Onmaths website – allows students to complete past papers online with immediate feedback. Once they complete a full paper they will get an approximate grade. Extremely helpful as it allows you to see if you are making progress.



GCSE Science: OCR exam board

Some students are following the Triple Science route and will gain separate GCSE grades (1-9) for Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Most students are following the GCSE Combined Science route. This course covers material from Biology, Chemistry and Physics but will result in two Science GCSEs grades (1,1 to 9,9) which come from the average performance across all the GCSE Science exams.

Students on either route can apply to study any A-level Science course



Science Exams

All students will sit 6 GCSE science exams in the summer; 2 in Biology, 2 in Chemistry and 2 in Physics.

For the Triple Science groups, each exam will be 1 hour 45 minutes long to examine the additional content covered in Triple Science.

For the Combined Science groups, each exam will be 1 hour 10 minutes long.



Making the most of Science

Ensure you bring the correct equipment to each lesson, particularly the correct exercise book and your own scientific calculator.

Address weaknesses, or anything you don't understand, as they arise. All the Science teachers are happy to go through tricky concepts again at lunchtime or after school – don't be afraid to ask!

Try to attend every lesson. If you are absent be proactive and ask your teacher what you have missed; it could have been a required practical activity which you will need to do at some point.



Revising for Science

If students wish to purchase a GCSE revision guide, we recommend the CPG revision guide. Encourage students to bring this to lessons as well as using it to aid your revision at home.

Look at the OCR specification and either download or print a copy for the course you are following. This is a list of everything you will need to know for your GCSE exam. A good tip is to tick off each topic as you revise it.

Revise the required practical activities as well as the content covered in each lesson. The exam board is required to include questions on these experiments.

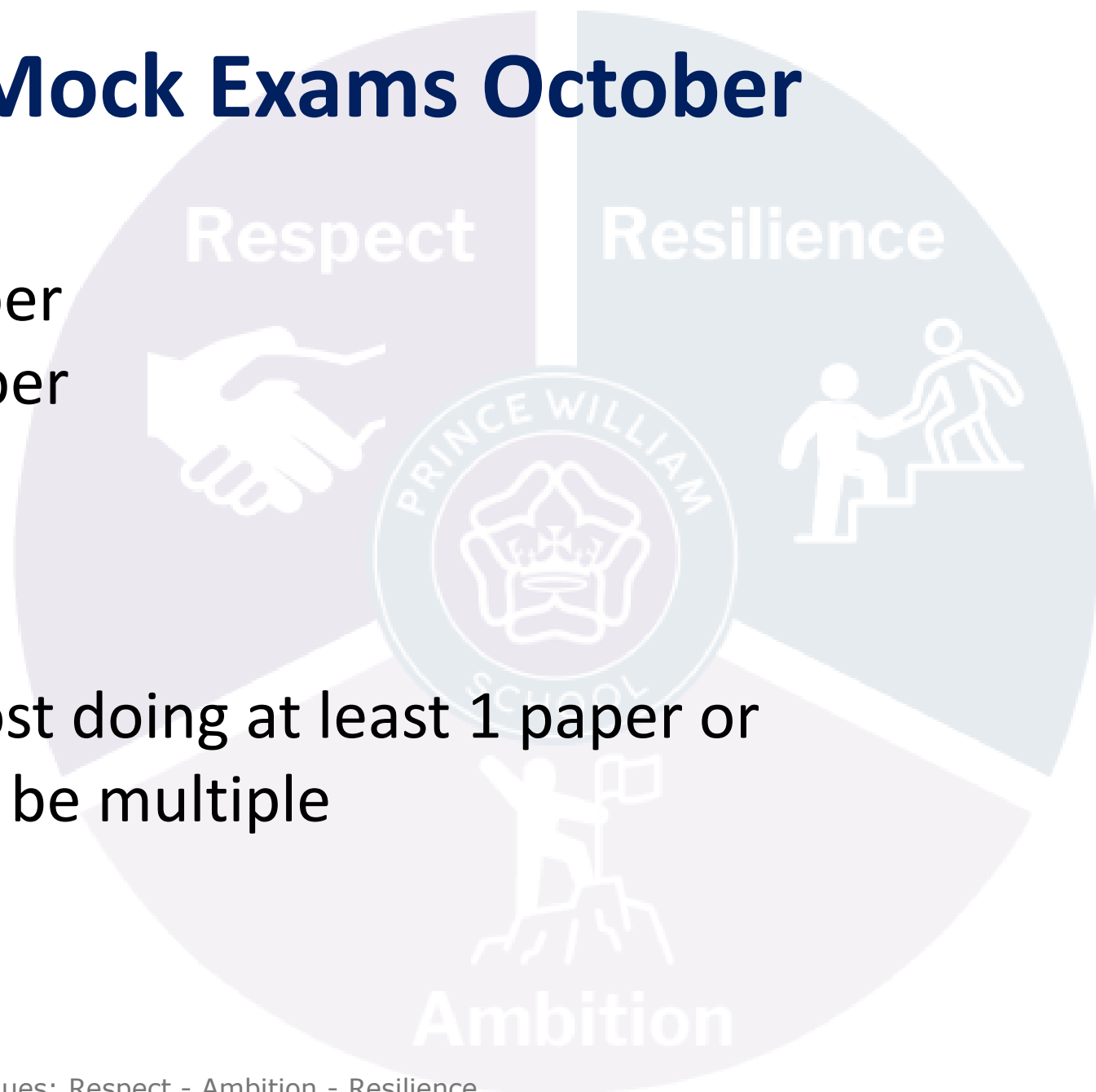
Revise for your mock exams. Every year the students who work hard in preparing for their mock exams will ultimately make the most progress.



Year 11 Mock Exams October

English Language Paper
English Literature Paper
3 x Maths Papers
3 x Science Papers

Option Subjects – most doing at least 1 paper or practical – some may be multiple





Year 11 Mock Exams October

Individual timetables will be confirmed in the next few weeks, but all is subject to change at this stage

Most subjects give students the opportunity to complete all papers within a qualification during either Mock 1 or Mock 2

Subject teachers will be able to give students more details regarding what their mocks are on



Supporting Students

Speak to Mr Guest or
your child's form
tutor

Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST)
Areas of need analysis to inform Service Delivery – Wave 5
July 2021

Rebecca Stevenson, MHST Clinical & Team Lead
Laura Keon, CYP Business Support Lead

NHS
Northamptonshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
HEALTHCARE NHS
FOUNDATION TRUST**

#weareNHFT

Inspected and rated
Outstanding ☆

**Care Quality
Commission**

**MAKING A
DIFFERENCE
FOR YOU,
WITH YOU**



Central pillars to success

- Establish plans for September 2027 as early as possible
- Begin revising now
- Work hard in class
- Complete all homework
- Attend school as much as possible





Next Step – in place by Christmas

By law, all students need to be in education, employment (with training) or an apprenticeship until they are 18

The sooner a young person knows why they are doing all this hard work, the more likely they will be to do it

Explore open evenings at PWS (19th November) and other colleges in the area

All students will have a careers 1-2-1 session with Kate Allen, Careers Advisor

Explore on-line career activities. Research the possibilities available – Unifrog can help with this

Think about the different routes – A levels, vocational courses, T Levels and apprenticeships (apprentice roadshow 15 October in school)

YOUR NEXT STEP

Careers guidance and post-16 information for parents & carers



01

1:1 CAREERS APPOINTMENT

Every Year 11 student will meet with Kate Allen, Careers Advisor, for an individual careers appointment.

02

23 SEPTEMBER ASSEMBLY

Post-16 options will be introduced, including Sixth Form, College and Apprenticeships.

03

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

The post-16 information from the assembly will be shared with parents and carers afterwards.

QUESTIONS ABOUT POST-16?

kate.allen@pws.emat.uk

Kate Allen | Careers Advisor

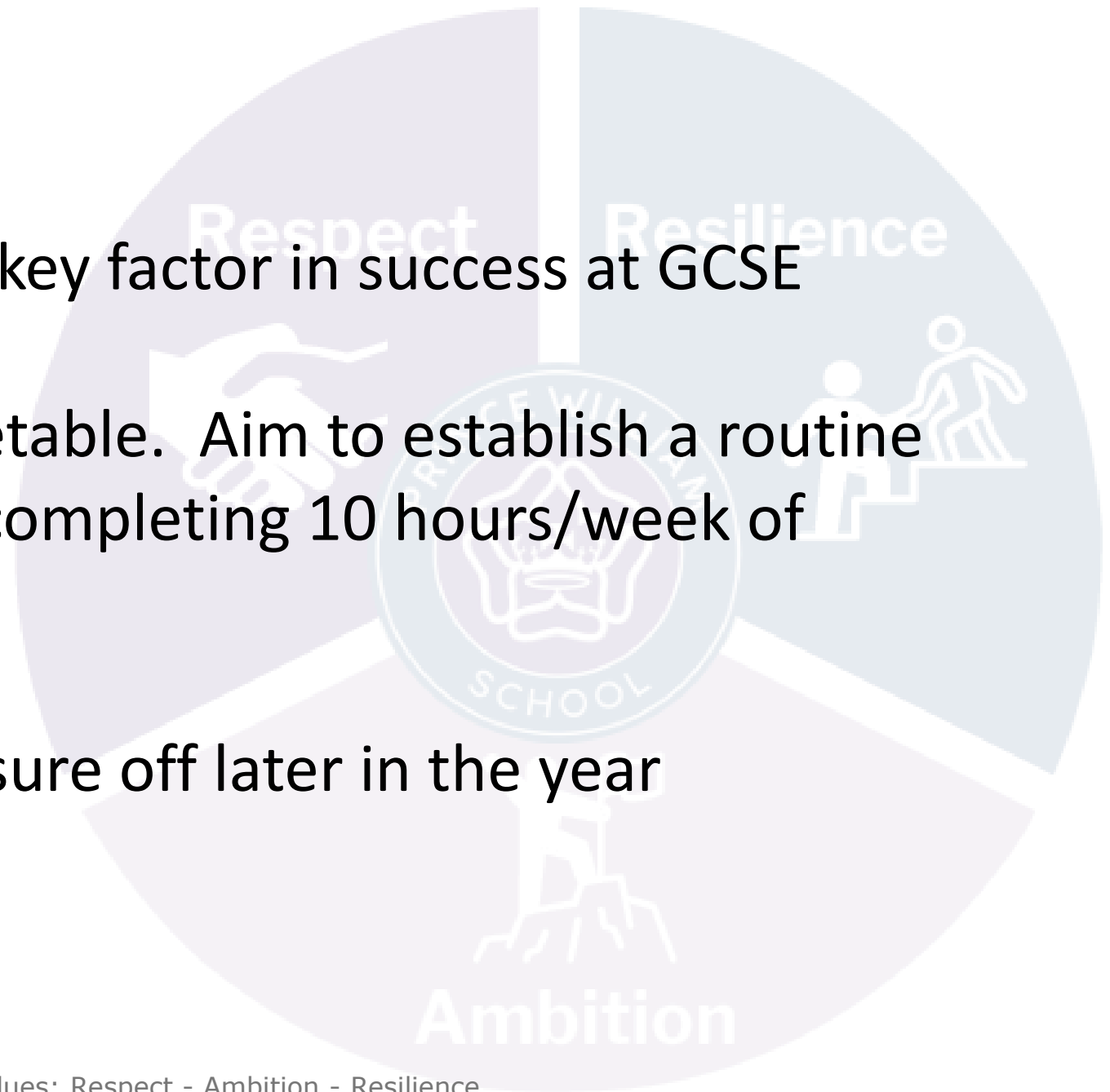


Revision

Learning to revise is a key factor in success at GCSE

Start by making a timetable. Aim to establish a routine whereby a student is completing 10 hours/week of revision now

This will take the pressure off later in the year





Active Revision

Try –

Mind mapping

Summarising

Internet resources/Apps – [Free Homework & Revision for A Level, GCSE, KS3 & KS2 \(senecalearning.com\)](https://www.senecalearning.com)

Coloured cards

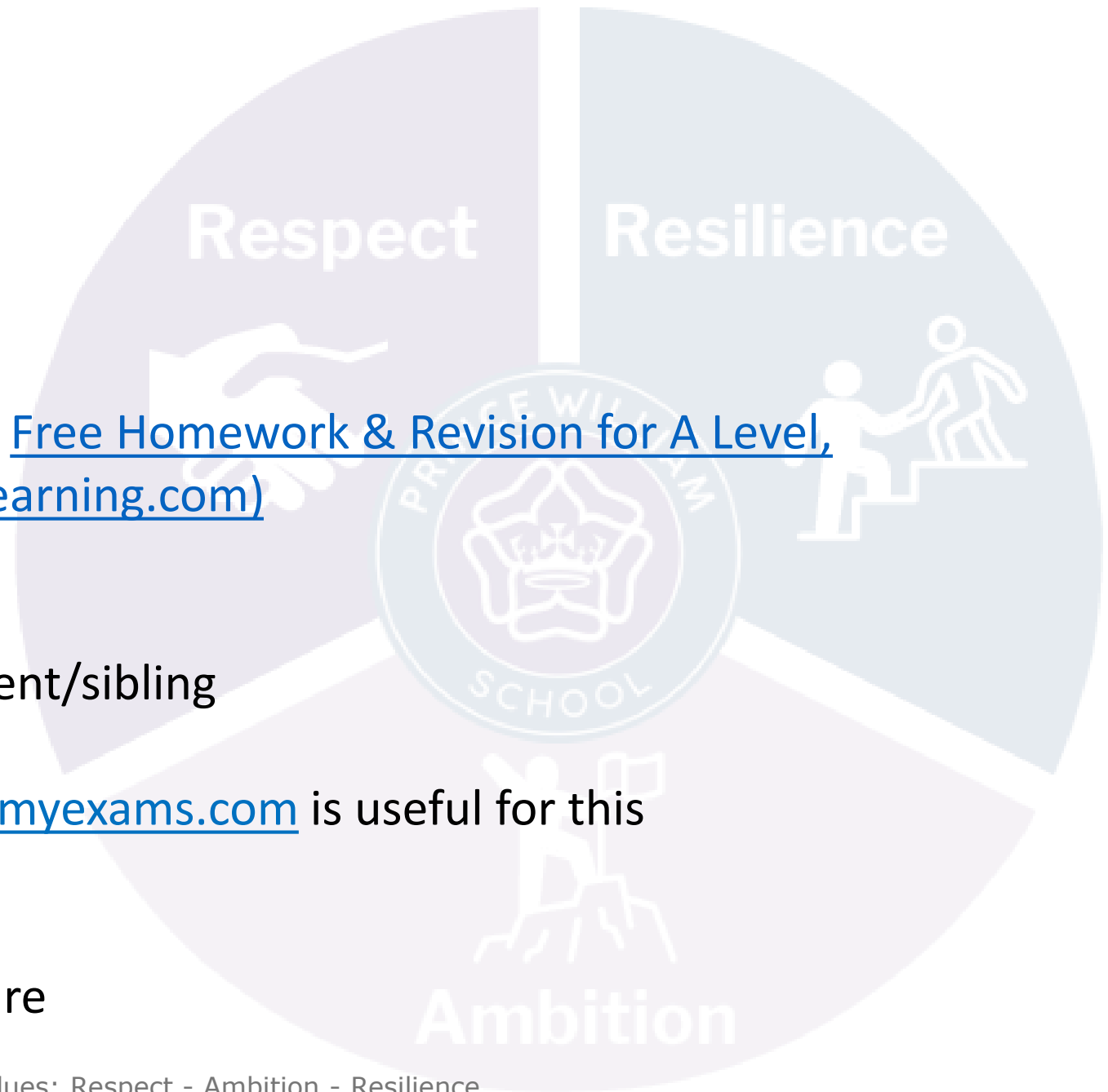
Post-its

Teaching the cat/your parent/sibling

Revision books - CGP

Past paper practice – [savemyexams.com](https://www.savemyexams.com) is useful for this

Think about a rewards structure





Approaching the Exams

Reduce other commitments like work or hobbies – but keep enough to maintain good mental health

Ensure that attendance is good. Medical appointments need to be outside school time (as far as possible) and please do not take holidays during term time

Plan quality time off

Students should work increasingly in silence with no electronic distractions

Revision needs to tailor to the exam – if it is a written subject, write!



During the Exams

Prepare the night before

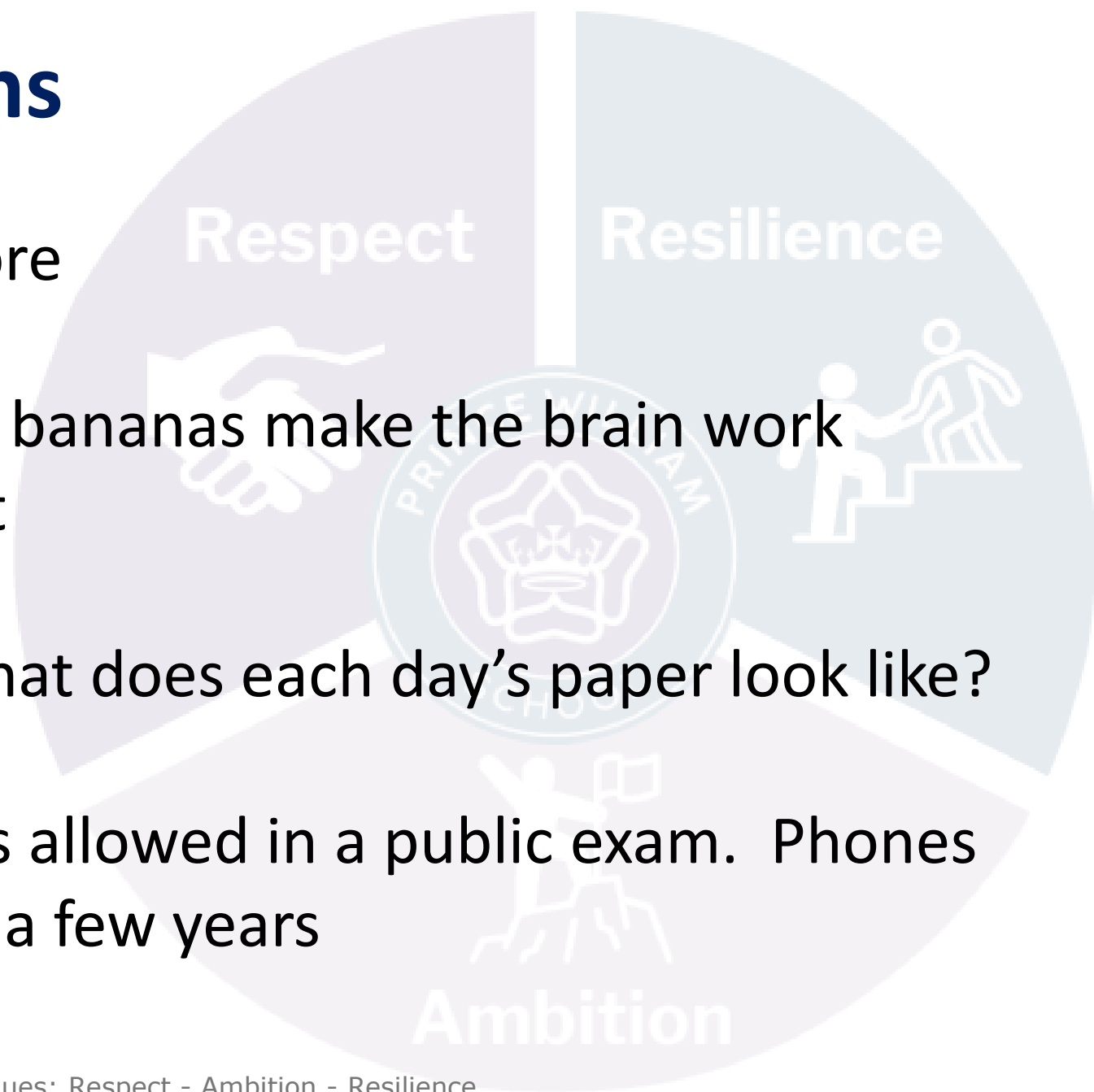
Get plenty of rest

Eat a good breakfast – bananas make the brain work

Hydration is important

Know your exams – what does each day's paper look like?

No watch of any sort is allowed in a public exam. Phones have been banned for a few years





Best of Luck!



Summary page

- Applications for September 2027 should be in by Christmas
- Maths – AQA (8300), Science – OCR, English – Edexcel
- Start revising now
- Make a timetable and be ACTIVE
- Attend school 100%
- Make the most of every learning opportunity in school
- Practise past papers as the exams approach
- Mocks start 19th October and 18th January