

This assembly is about you realising your potential

I am going to give you some very specific advice and you won't remember it all. Research tells us that on average we only remember about 10% of what we hear. For that reason, I will put this assembly's advice on the front page of the College website. It will be called 'Realising your potential assembly.' And you can go back to it later if you wish to.

Realising potential is the school's motto and we take it seriously. How you do matters to us, it really matters.

It has never been more important to do well at school. Of course you can succeed in life and in work without qualifications; but it is much harder to do these days. Most doors are already closed to you by the age of 16 if you have no qualifications. Many doors close if you don't have good qualifications that include English and Maths.

Think for a minute about the subjects you do. What would be a realistic but fantastic set of results for you by the end of Year 11? Go through each one in your head.

Now think specifically about English and Maths. I pick those ones out because you are all doing them and because they are essential for most College courses, for universities and for future jobs. What grade are you likely to get in English and maths?

You should be aiming very high! What we know is that if we aim low, we often under-achieve and if we aim high we have a much better chance of achieving highly! So think about the highest grade you can possibly achieve for each subject!

Did you know that only a relatively small percentage of students at this school used to do very well in their exams? About 50% of students on average used to leave Chesterton with 5 higher grades or equivalent. No longer! Last summer, 88% of all the Year 11s left with 5 or more higher grades! And 43% of all the grades achieved were A* or A or equivalent! We have very high

expectations of all of you; we expect you to do well and what we ask is that you do your bit.

Here are 6 things you can do to help yourself, to realise your potential

1. For each subject you are taking, think about the grades you want to achieve, setting them as high as you can. If you are not sure of the grade you could achieve, ask your teacher.
2. Find out how you are doing at the moment in each subject you are studying. Are you on track to do as well as you should or could?
3. For any subjects where you are not on track, find out from the teacher now what it is you need to do to get on track; and do it and keep doing it! And even if you are on track, there may be other things you can do to do better still; ask your teacher for advice.
4. Writing things down helps us focus and it also allows us to go back and look at what we have written regularly afterwards. Write down the grade you want to achieve in each subject. Write down what it is you need to do to achieve that grade. Then, regularly go back to the grades and what you needed to do and ask yourself and your teacher the question: Am I on track? How can I improve?
5. Good grades aren't made in the spring and summer terms of Year 11, when, sadly, some students finally realise they have to work hard and revise. Good grades are made much earlier than that. In your case, you still have the time to make a huge difference to your final grades, with what you do today and tomorrow and next week.
6. Some students have a problem revising for tests and remembering things they want to or need to learn. In their case it's not that they don't try, it's just that information won't stick in their heads easily. Is that you? Reading through notes or a book several times in your head is the most common way that students revise and it's usually the only thing most students do. Do you do that? On its own, it's probably the least effective thing you can do! For any topic you are trying to learn or revise, you have to read the text of course! But do these things, too:

First, summarise the key points you need to learn in your own words; use a mind map if you know how to do that.

Then summarise again, with even briefer notes and try to recall the key facts just using those brief notes. Go back to the original text if you need to and then go back to the brief notes again. You will start to remember the key facts just from the brief notes.

Finally, using the brief notes, teach someone else the topic. Explaining something to someone else is the most powerful way of committing it to your long term memory! Do you remember me saying at the beginning that we remember on average about 10% of what we hear? We remember about 90% of what we teach! Teach your parents, your brothers and sisters, your friends! It doesn't matter who you teach, just teach someone!

Try it, it really works!

It sounds dramatic but the truth is that you are shaping your whole future life now with the expectations you set yourself now the effort you put in now. If you put the effort in now and keep putting it in, you will be so proud of yourself in 18 months time, because you will have realised your potential!

Mr Patterson

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