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3rd July 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians of first form students,

Re: buying a calculator for second form students

In mathematics lessons in the first form, pupils did not need a calculator because we wrote a scheme of work that would help build on the skills gained at primary school. However, with more difficult calculations required in second form, including those involved in Pythagoras' Theorem, and trigonometry on the not-so-distant horizon, it is important that students come equipped with a scientific calculator to mathematics lessons.

Therefore, I would ask that you purchase a scientific calculator for your son/daughter before they return to school in September. Since new models are released frequently, the examination bodies do not publish a list of permitted calculators but the following can be considered guidelines:

- Calculators must be of a size suitable for use on the desk and either battery- or solar-powered.
- Calculators must not be designed or adapted to offer language translators, symbolic algebra manipulation, symbolic differentiation or integration or communication with other machines or the internet.
- Calculators must not have retrievable information stored in them, including databanks, dictionaries, mathematical formulae or text.

The packaging of most scientific calculators indicates whether the model is suitable for GCSE and they can usually be purchased for about £12-15.

With the changes to the new A Level, which starts in September of this year, students need an enhanced scientific calculator and the department is requesting students buy the Casio fx-991EX Classwiz, which retails for around £25. At present I cannot find definitive proof that says the Classwiz can be used in GCSE examinations and that is why I am not recommending it to you at this time. Also, the chances are that between now and four years down the road the calculator you buy now may be lost or broken and that is why I recommend the cheaper purchase at this stage. If you have any questions, please contact me via e-mail on whiten@ripongrammar.co.uk.

I would also like to remind students that they need to bring a protractor (for measuring angles), a compass (for drawing circles) and a glue stick so that sheets can be stuck in straight away and not lost.

We look forward to continuing your child's mathematical education in the coming academic year.

Yours sincerely,

Mr N White

Head of Mathematics

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