



24 March 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians

I am writing to update you regarding the advice that we are being given by the Department for Education regarding the awarding of GCSE and A Level exam grades this summer.

The Government has confirmed that this year's summer exam series including GCSEs and A Levels have been cancelled and will not take place. They have promised that the grades that the students are awarded will fairly reflect the work that they have put in and will not disadvantage students with regard to their next steps.

To do this exam boards will be asking teachers to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead (i.e. our predicted grades and not the mock grades). The exam boards will then combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, and use this information to produce a calculated grade for each student, which will be a best assessment of the work they have put in.

The Government recognises that some students may nevertheless feel disappointed that they haven't been able to sit their exams. If they do not believe the correct process has been followed in their case they will be able to appeal on that basis. In addition, if they do not feel their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam at the earliest reasonable opportunity as set by the exam boards, once schools are open again. Students will also have the option to sit their exams in summer 2021.

Our advice to Year 11, Year 12 and 13 students is therefore to keep on top of their studies and revision so that they continue to ensure that their understanding is at a high level. This will mean that all students would be in a strong position to make a decision about whether they sat an exam if they were unhappy with their outcome when grades are published. It is also my strong advice to ensure that any Non-Examined Assessments (NEAs) are completed to the best of their ability and to contact their teachers if they need further support with this.

Teachers will have already provided work for Year 11,12 and 13 students and students are already aware of the many resources that are available for students to access remotely. Teachers will then be available to support individual students by email as required.

A little later on we will start to provide some bridging work for our Year 11 students who are going to continue their studies in the Sixth Form so that they are well prepared for starting the Sixth Form in September. It will be important for all students to be preparing themselves for the next stage of their education so I urge students to get in contact with their college or training provider to see what preparations can be done. Just to reiterate, it is important to keep the brain active!

We know that the cancellation of the exam season has caused a great deal of concern for students and you as parents. It is very upsetting to have prepared so hard for something only to find out, with no notice, that it is not going ahead. I am confident that the Government plan will mean that students will receive a fair grade and that it will reflect the efforts that they have made to this point, so near to the final exams. There are still a number of issues that the Government will need to resolve and I will keep you updated when we know more.

Jim Parker
Principal

