



30<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear parent / carer of Year 11,

First of all, I hope this letter finds you and your family well. These truly are unprecedented times and more than anything else we hope that you are all safe and well.

In light of the most recent government advice, we know that there will be no public examinations this summer. The government have also indicated that student grades will be determined based on work that has already been completed but more guidance and clarity is needed as there has been no further detail on how the GCSE and A Level grades are to be awarded this summer.

The aim is to provide these calculated grades to students before the end of July. In terms of a permanent record, the grades will be indistinguishable from those provided in other years. We will also aim to ensure that the distribution of grades follows a similar pattern to that in other years, so that this year's students do not face a systematic disadvantage as a consequence of these extraordinary circumstances.

If they do not believe their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam at the earliest reasonable opportunity, once schools are open again.

We are hearing some murmurings about schools having to send their grades to the exam boards so the work being set and completed now might possibly inform teachers' opinion with regard to the amount of progress made since the Mocks. It will also be valuable work for those who decide to take the new "optional exam" in the Autumn in order to get a higher grade than the exam board has awarded.

Some subjects may have not finished the content of their courses so this will be completed as well as past paper questions. Therefore, those who wish to take one of the optional exams will have covered the entire course. The work that your child's teachers will be setting for students to complete may also target preparing students for the Sixth Form or their next stage in learning. This may include completing existing course content, as well as broader, more investigative tasks that enable students to engage with some of the content and thinking required at Key Stage 5.

From an academic viewpoint, the best thing to come out of this will be that your child is reading and thinking about learning, not because they need to pass an exam but because they are becoming more knowledgeable. Parents and carers, do not put pressure on yourselves to become teachers and do not stress over how much work your child has done compared to other people's children. The situation we face is about stopping the spread of a virus, and all of our educational expectations must reflect that. We fully appreciate that households will face illness, strain on time due to the need to care for loved ones and that there will be multiple demands on limited computer facilities. Teachers will also face those same demands.

BE YOUR BEST

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As you will already know, a timetable has been sent that outlines the times of live learning sessions and staff will be making work available to be done offline. However, there will undoubtedly be issues with this. Where students cannot access the live learning this is not a problem; a recording of the session should be available. Where a teacher is unable to deliver a live session, this will be communicated to students via email. The live learning is a very small part of the distance learning programme for Year 11. The main focus will be on tasks that students can complete in their own time. Throughout all of this, patience and understanding are essential.

I do wish you and your family all the best.

Keep safe and take care.

Yours sincerely,

Mr M Evans  
Vice Principal