



Traditional **Values**

Contemporary **Aspirations**

Creative **Curiosity**

23rd March 2020
ML.19.20.0186.CHA

Dear Parent/Carer of Year 11,

We are writing to you to update you on the information that we have received from the government about their approach to awarding grades for pupils who have studied for GCSE (and equivalent) exams, following the cancellation of this year's summer exams series.

Pupils will be awarded grades. Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator, is working urgently with the exam boards to set out proposals for how this process will work and will be talking to teachers' representatives before finalising an approach, to ensure that the approach taken is as fair as possible. For many years, teachers have been asked to estimate the performance of their pupils either for internal monitoring or to provide information to exam boards and are very experienced in this work.

Pupils will not be awarded grades based on a single mock exam. Ofqual will develop a process that takes into account a broad range of evidence, including teacher assessment and prior attainment. Safeguards will be put in place to ensure schools do not seek to "inflate" pupils' grades.

It has been made clear that if pupils who do not feel the calculated grades they receive reflect their performance, they will be given the opportunity to appeal and sit an exam, as soon as is reasonably possible after schools and colleges open again. All pupils are likely to be given the opportunity to sit exams in summer 2021 should they wish.

Full information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020>

We are aware that some schools and colleges are asking pupils to complete additional assessments while schools are "closed". This approach is fraught with difficulties, not least that these cannot be conducted in controlled conditions and therefore it seems to have very limited value. This is not an approach we will be taking.

We will write to you again as soon as we are given more guidance. Our staff are working very hard to support the children of key workers and vulnerable young people who are still in school and staff are also working to develop the best possible resources and guidance for pupils and parents for those who are at home. We are not able to engage in individual conversations with parents or pupils about the grade awarding process as we do not have any more information at this stage. Please rest assured though, that we will continue to do everything we can to ensure that our pupils receive the grades they deserve and go on to do whatever it is they want to do next year. We have been told that pupils should receive their grades at the end of July, rather than in August as is usually the case.

Thank you for all your support. As we said last week, we are incredibly proud of how our pupils conducted themselves last week in such difficult circumstances. We will write to you again when we receive more detailed information.

Kind regards

Jonny Uttley
CEO

Patrick Sprakes
Headteacher