

24 March 2020

Coronavirus – Update

Remote Learning

Thank you for your patience and support with the adaptation to remote learning this week, including in the face of technological faults nationally with Firefly. Fortunately, we chose to operate Microsoft Teams alongside Firefly and we have advised staff to share files and resources in the File folder of each class on Teams when Firefly is temperamental. At the end of this week we will collate feedback from all stakeholders and it will be reviewed carefully over Easter to pave the way for the improvements we expect to make from the start of next term. Our commitment remains to provide the best possible remote learning experience in support of your children.

Public Examination Grades

The Senior Leadership Team met (via Teams) this evening. There is still no specific guidance from Ofqual or the Government over how GCSE and A Level grades will be generated beyond that shared in my Friday bulletin, but we have made decisions that we believe will serve your children's interests. Ahead of whatever deadline is imposed on schools for providing data to Ofqual, we will ensure all your children have the opportunity to enhance the attainment data they have already generated. We intend to achieve this via a supportive series of assessments over the first half of next term. The reason for a series of smaller assessments is to support the best possible outcomes from students who will be submitting work remotely across a variety of different family contexts, and in relation to different parts of their courses. We are determined to balance the importance of gathering this data alongside the need to be compassionate and supportive of individual circumstances. There will be no single high-stakes 'mock', and no one-time-only test to succeed in, but a series of spread out mini-assessments, each supported and steered towards by our staff. We expect students to work towards performing as well as they can in some or all of the assessments (based on personal context at the time) and for us to be able to select and use the best data we can to advocate for predicted grades. Further details will be provided ahead of next term as the picture develops, but in the short term, students in Years 11 and 13 should remain focused on completing courses, coursework, and planning a full revision programme over Easter as they would normally. Based on the information we have currently, we believe this approach is most likely to be of benefit to your children alongside having the flexibility to support any changing picture of personal and family context. We will of course review the details of this strategy in light of any new updates from Ofqual.

Transition into Year 12

The normal expectation for automatic transition from Year 11 into Year 12 in the achievement of at least six grade 6s in GCSEs, including 7s where necessary in subjects to be

taken at A Level. We will review this policy next term based on both the compassionate reality of these unprecedented times as they unfold, and on the educational logic of how Grades are ultimately decided, when we know. We will ensure families of Year 11 students are kept in the loop when any updated thinking is reached. Once again, our priority is to support your children's best interests going forwards.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N P Hewlett'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'N' and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr N P Hewlett
Headmaster