

MBA/PPA/Y11
4 March 2021

By Parentmail



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Dear Parents/ Carers

We are very much looking forward to welcoming Year 11 back to school on 8th March. The purpose of this letter is to update you on our approach to the awarding of Year 11 GCSE grades.

The Prime Minister's announcement on Monday 22nd February and the recent update from Ofqual has meant that we have had time to reflect and to consider how best to ensure that:

1. Students "get the grade that is a true reflection of their work";
2. Assessments "what they (students) have been taught".

As outlined in my letter of 26th February, the grading system will be built around teachers' judgements – with schools being allowed to decide on the evidence to be used, such as mock exams, assessments, coursework and essays. There will be no algorithm determining grades.

Our approach and rationale

- We already know our students well and have been tracking their progress closely since the beginning of Year 10. This is an advantage of our being a small school.
- We are determined to give our students the best opportunities to further demonstrate what they are capable of. Therefore in our view, the best way to do this is for students to complete exam style questions in class after a period of re-teaching/ revision beforehand. In coursework based subjects, teachers will confirm the aspects of that still need to be completed. Students **will** only now focus on topics that they have already studied and/ or existing coursework.
- Teachers will mark and give students crucial feedback on what they need to improve. This knowledge of areas to improve will give our students the ability to demonstrate improvement in these areas to their teachers in subsequent lessons, class tests, coursework and GCSE level questions enabling students to finish Year 11 in the best possible position.
- Giving students formal mock assessments either just before or just after Easter, in our view, does **not** give our Year 11 students the best opportunity to showcase what they are capable of – especially as they have had very little practice with formal assessments since the November examinations.

Inspiring, enabling and celebrating each and every young person's personal best

- Final grades will **not** be based on any one assessment and it is our intention that a “broad range of evidence” is used.
- We envisage Friday 28th May being the last day of our ‘evidence gathering’ period.

Year 11 Progress Evening

This is a crucial evening and a key part of the feedback process. Parents, carers and students are strongly encourage to attend. We will write to you again to confirm the arrangements – this will be via Teams.

Finally

We appreciate that this is a challenging time. Finishing Year 11, returning to school and emerging out of lockdown was never going to be without its complications. Ultimately, we want to give our Year 11 students the **best chances** of accessing their very **best grades** this year and give them the **best preparation** for the next stage in their chosen pathway.

We will continue to do all that we can to support each and every student in viewing these remaining weeks as an opportunity to confirm what has already been achieved and then to demonstrate what they are capable of – and most crucially – how they are still improving.

We continue to be really impressed with the overall attitude of the year group and I hope this will continue for the remainder of the academic year.

As ever, thank you for your support and do reach out if you have any questions or queries.

Yours sincerely



Pia Parker
Head of School



Mark Barrow
Chief Executive Officer