

Our ref: PJS/DKP

5 January 2021

Dear Year 11

I wanted to contact you to reassure you after yesterday's news about GCSE exams not taking place. I am sure you experienced a mix of emotions from relief to frustration as you began to process what that means for you. Certainly, for us it is very frustrating because you're an excellent year group and we were convinced we were going to smash the results this year.

At the moment, we have no details other than that the Department for Education will be working with Ofqual to come up with an alternative. The government haven't explicitly said that there will be no exams, but just that they won't take place as usual. However, I think it's unlikely there will be exams to any great extent. I cannot see them having the gall to go back to the failed algorithm of last year, so it is likely to be some form of teacher assessment. The fact they've chosen to tell us so early suggests that there will be greater rigour than last year and there will probably be a system of moderation across schools.

The most important thing is to not 'down tools' at the moment because there are no exams. It is quite possible that work that you do now will be crucial evidence, along with your November mock results which might be requested in order to establish grades. I know it may be difficult to motivate yourself when you're not in school, but the work you do now could be crucial to your final grades. Inevitably it will be a long time before they decide what they're going to do instead of usual GCSEs, however we're likely to get some hints and possibilities and I will share those with you when I know and we will be making sure our teaching is tailored to suit the new demands.

From next week we will have more interactive online learning alongside the independent work. It is really important you engage with it so that we can keep continuing to collect evidence of your levels of attainment. We may well have to modify the work we set or how we teach and feedback according to the changing situation.

The most important thing at this stage is to realise that your grades are in your hands and rest assured that as a school we will adapt our approach to support you to do the very best you can.

Stay safe, keep determined and things will work out well.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely



P Jenkins
Headteacher