



25 January 2021

Dear Year 10 parents, carers and students

Year 10 Early Entry RS GCSE

You will have heard in the news and in our recent webinar that national GCSE examinations in summer 2021 have been cancelled and will be replaced with a process of teacher assessed grades. At Lowton, we have always planned that the whole of Year 10 would take their RS GCSE a year earlier than normal. This has been a proven approach over time for students to gain one of their GCSEs early in one of the strongest performing subjects in the school.

We have decided to go ahead with our early entry plans so that all students in Year 10 complete and achieve a grade in GCSE RS this summer. As planned, this frees up time in Year 11 for time to be given to other subjects. This is now particularly important in the light of the lost time during the pandemic.

The benefit of this is to reduce the burden on students in Year 11 as well as getting students into the habit of preparing for national examinations and developing the necessary learning habits to be successful in Year 11.

For students, by having one subject graded this year, they will have an important piece of evidence ahead of applying for college places next year. They will be at a strong advantage if they are able to show a strong grade in one of their subjects ahead of time. It is a sign of what can be achieved in a wider suite of subjects in Year 11.

Our Year 10 curriculum is structured to enable us to do this well by giving extra time to RS in Year 10 (4 lessons per week) to ensure students cover the content and can get ready for the examination.

The RS teachers have looked at the curriculum and what is left to be taught. They are confident that it can be covered during this lockdown period in conjunction with the time when students return to school in due course.

The RS team have mapped out what needs to be taught including an approach that allows us to assess what students know and need further support on. This is known as graded assessment. It is an approach we have introduced to all of Year 11.

This means it is essential that every student completes all their recorded lessons, joins every live lesson and completes all the homework and assessments that are given by their teachers. The teacher assessed grade that can be given has to be based on evidence that shows the standard a student is working at. It will **not** be based on a prediction of what a student might be able to achieve. If you have any questions please contact the relevant RS teacher directly.

Yours faithfully

Kieran Larkin
Headteacher

CARING, LEARNING AND SUCCEEDING