



9th December 2020

Dear parents and carers,

## **Year 11 January Mocks and Summer 2021 examinations**

As we near the end of the first term of this academic year, I wanted to write to thank you for all your support this term in this very important year for your child.

Of course, in terms of face-to-face teaching, the term has been disrupted on two occasions and some have experienced greater disruption due to family related self-isolation.

Last week, the Government released information relating to adjustments to the examinations that will take place in summer 2021 in the light of the pandemic situation. I have put the links to the DfE press release and the detail released from Ofqual, the examinations regulator, at the end of this letter. The summary of the main points is:

- a three-week delay for most exams – most starting from 7th June (already known).
- more generous grading than usual, in line with national outcomes from 2020, so students this year are not disadvantaged;
- students receiving advance notice of some topic areas covered in GCSEs to focus revision;
- exam aids (e.g. formula sheets) provided in some exams giving students more confidence and reducing the amount of information they need to memorise;
- additional exams to give students a second chance to sit a paper if the main exams or assessments are missed due to illness or self-isolation;
- a national expert group will provide detail in January on what pre-exam content will be made available and what aids will be allowed.

In school, we need to continue as we have set out to do this year: to recover the time that has been lost, ensure the full content of each examination course is covered and prepare your child for their examinations. We will integrate the detail of what the Government announce into our planning when it is known. However, ahead of that we are finalising a Year 11 plan for the January to June period so that we can focus your child's time and our energies to help them do their very best.

Our plan will include the following components:

- A 'preparation for Year 11 mocks' programme.
- A webinar for parents and students in January.
- Year 11 Mocks (starting Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January, spread over 3 weeks).
- Reporting on Year 11 mocks and adjusting teaching plans accordingly.
- Year 11 parents' evening (Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021).
- A wellbeing and mentoring programme for students.
- Revision skills and access to resources, including recorded revision lessons.
- February half term revision, Easter revision and May half term revision sessions.
- Amended programmes for Friday 'Lesson 7' to accommodate more subjects.

## **CARING, LEARNING AND SUCCEEDING**

The mocks at the end of January will give us an early indication of how your child is doing and how they perform in examination conditions. The outcomes of these will allow us to work up a more bespoke teaching and revision plan up to the final examinations.

We want the mocks to allow students to gain a sense of success in what they know and so we are working up the detail of providing a summary for students of what areas or topics to revise for their mocks and what aids (e.g. formula sheets, texts etc.) they can have in their mocks.

This is likely to reflect what will be announced by the Government at the end of January.

Either way, as I said at the start of the year, I do not want assessment and examinations to be an experience that demotivates students and reinforces any gaps not yet addressed. I want the mocks to be a positive experience where students can experience success if they prepare well with the information we give them.

To support you as parents help prepare your child for the period of January to June we are holding another information evening in January to say more on this. We will hold a webinar to brief parents and students on **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January at 6.00 pm**. We will send the access details nearer the time.

We will likely have a further webinar when the Government has published fuller details on the adjustments to the 2021 examinations at the end of January.

If you have any questions relating to your child, your key points of contact are:

- For pastoral queries please contact your child's Form Tutor or Ms Busek (Head of Year 11).
- For subject matters, please contact their relevant subject teacher.

Students will have briefing sessions on preparations for their mocks in Form Time and will receive their mock timetable on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December.

Thank you for all your ongoing support to ensure your child achieves their very best.

Yours faithfully,

**Kieran Larkin**  
Headteacher

You can read the full detail of the DfE announcement here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-measures-to-support-students-ahead-of-next-summertime-exams>

Ofqual, the exams regulator issued a more detailed explanation of what this means for students taking examinations. The detail can be read here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/exams-and-assessments-in-the-months-ahead>