



2nd November 2020

Dear parents and carers

Letter to all parents of children in Year 11.

I hope and pray that this letter finds you well. You will have seen a general letter to all parents, but in addition I wanted to write to you as parents with children in Year 11. We start the new half term in the context of an imminent second national lockdown that will start from this Thursday. However, you will know from the news that **schools are to remain open.**

Teaching and examinations:

Like me, you will be very conscious of the importance of this year for your child with their GCSE examinations due to take place in summer 2021. It was recently announced that most GCSE examinations in England have been pushed back by three weeks and will start from 7 June.

There is likely to be further disruption in the coming weeks and months and so we are looking ahead to minimise the impact on Year 11 and do all we can to support them through the year and prepare them well for summer 2021 as well as look after their wellbeing.

In the event that we need to alter our normal face-to-face approach in school, we will do all we can to minimise the impact on Year 11s direct teaching time.

Lesson 7:

Lesson 7 is the extra time we have added into the school day for Year 11 to provide extra time in a range of subjects to help address the time lost last year during lockdown. Thank you for your support with this. Engagement by pupils in it has been very strong. We are making some small changes to the model this half term as a result of some feedback from both pupils and teachers.

From this Friday (6th November) until the end of this half term, lesson 7 on a Friday is going to be more targeted towards selected pupils studying History or Geography. If this applies to your child you and they will receive a letter by the end of this Wednesday identifying those that we have selected for this half term. This will allow the additional teaching time to be more targeted at pupils' needs.

For January, we will allocate the lesson 7 time on a Friday to other subjects and other pupils allowing for a fairer spread of the time available over the year so that more subjects and pupils benefit.

In addition to 'Lesson 7', some pupils have requested further support before and after school. We are currently looking into making this available and aim to write to you again next week with how we are able to accommodate that. It is very encouraging to see so many Year 11 pupils eager to do well in their studies this year.

CARING, LEARNING AND SUCCEEDING

Assessment:

We aim to take a sensible approach to assessment in this first half term. We have avoided early grading of pupils through full exams as we know time is better spent on teaching the content required and catching up on missed time. This does not mean we are not assessing pupils, but it means we have resisted assigning GCSE grades too soon. Our next report home to you at the end of this half term will do that.

Key dates:

- Year 11 remote parents' evening – Wednesday 11th November 2020.
- Year 11 mock examinations – week beginning 25th January 2021.

Your child's wellbeing:

We understand that the final year at secondary school can be stressful at times and this may be heightened all the more in the current context of the pandemic. If you have any concerns please speak with us using the contact details below. To support your child in school we will be doing the following:

- In PHSE this term pupils will be focusing on wellbeing. Pupils will be learning about the impact of COVID-19 and learning about positive coping strategies
- Your child's Form Tutor and the pastoral team will monitor pupils closely. If you have any concerns about your child, please contact your child's Form Tutor in the first instance.

Communication with school:

We are keen to keep in regular contact. Please contact us in the following ways:

- If it is a **subject matter** please contact the **subject teacher** directly.
- If it is a **wellbeing issue** please contact your child's **Form Tutor** or Head of Year (Ms Busek).
- If it is an **attendance** issue please contact the **Pastoral Office**.
- If it is a matter related to **COVID-19** please contact the **Pastoral Office** in the first instance.
- To report the outcome of a **COVID-19 test result** (positive or negative) please email us with the NHS confirmation at testresult@lowtonhs.wigan.sch.uk.
- If it is general query please phone the school or contact us at enquiries@lowtonhs.wigan.sch.uk.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully,

Kieran Larkin
Headteacher