

ST/KJP
8th January 2021

Dear Parent / Carer,

I hope you are well.

In my recent letter, I wrote that the Prime Minister had said on Monday that “not all exams” would be going ahead as normal this year because of the impact of Covid-19. I am writing to you today following the Government’s confirmation this week that there will be no GCSE, AS level and A’ level exams this year.

I know that this news may have been both disappointing and unsettling for your child, and for you. In spite of the disruption to the education of all children and young adults over the last 10 months, our students have continued to work hard in preparation for exams this summer, with the promise of good grades that follow that commitment and diligence. Therefore, I understand that cancelling exams can be dispiriting.

However, assessment of students has not been cancelled and grades will still be awarded – so I would urge your child to continue to remain as committed to their studies as they have always been. Additionally, learning for learning’s sake to gain knowledge and skills so they are successful, well-rounded citizens at school and after they leave, is at the core of what our students do each day with us, and that does not change simply because there will be no exams.

The fact that our school has closed, along with every other school in the country, except for vulnerable students or children of key workers, makes the situation more challenging, with most students having now switched to remote learning. Your support in ensuring that your child continues to work hard and engage fully with their studies from home is therefore more important than ever, and I would like to thank you for continuing to help us make this as successful as possible.

The Government has said that grades will be awarded to exam-year students by a method of teacher or school assessment. The full details of exactly how that system will work has not yet been decided by the Government but it has confirmed that grades will not be adjusted or moderated by an algorithm and training and support will be provided to teachers. As soon as the final details have been decided I will write to you again so that you are fully informed.

For the January exams and assessments of vocational and technical qualifications, we have taken the decision to continue with these as we have no clarification from the Government on how grades will be awarded. Our staff and students have worked hard in preparing for these and it gives our students the opportunity to bank external assessments that will support their final grade. As always the academy will follow our risk assessment to ensure the safety of all who are taking exams.

I would like to end my letter by repeating my thanks to you for your ongoing support. We are all, whether students, parents or teachers, dealing with this exceptionally difficult period. Please do continue to help your child engage with their education as much as possible – the efforts that they, and you, put into these studies will bear fruit in the future.

Yours sincerely



Mr Stuart Turnbull
Principal

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