



8 January 2021

Dear Year 13 Parents, Carers and Students

Following what has been one of the most extraordinary and turbulent starts to any New Year, we would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for your support and contributions, enabling us to deliver our Remote Learning Programme to all Year Groups, with minimum disruption to planned learning.

Our Sixth Form students have continued to do us proud with the way in which they have continued to engage in the remote learning 'live' lessons and we are grateful that, for our students and teachers, the transition to the full time virtual classroom has been supported by our blended approach last term.

Many of you will have heard the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education that this summer's cancelled GCSE and A Level examinations will be determined by 'teacher assessed grades'. At present we do not know for certain how this will be conducted. Whilst we are pleased to hear that schools will be able to have significant input into the grading process, at this stage, we do not know what supporting evidence will be required to ensure that this is a fair and robust system across the country. Over the coming weeks, as we receive further guidance from the government, we will continue to update you.

Last year, evidence involved a mix of teacher assessment from classwork and homework, as well as results from in-class assessments and more formal exams. We want to be clear that students who engage in all remote lessons and work hard over the coming months, including this lock down period, can still make significant gains and improve their grade from their last mock performance and our current estimates. Hard work and effort really does pay off. Equally, if students were to become complacent and allow their focus to drift, it is quite likely that their grade could decline from their current position. We highly recommend that students continue to use their lesson and independent study time as effectively as possible.

Whilst it has been necessary to cancel the planned January mock examinations, it is anticipated that we will continue with a second set of formal mock examinations later in the term. Finalised details of these very much depend on government updates and guidance alongside COVID-19 arrangements. These will be an opportunity to demonstrate the gains made due to independent learning and consolidation since the October mock examinations. It is not necessary, at this stage, for any students to submit additional work to their teachers in support of improved grades. Attending registration every morning remains vital in ensuring that students receive the pastoral support they require, and Tutors can keep an eye on student wellbeing.

We now need to work together over the coming months to maintain high levels of motivation and support for our students to ensure that they can achieve the best grades they are capable of and will require for their next steps beyond the Sixth Form.

We look forward to working in partnership with you during these final terms of Year 13. We appreciate that many of you will face challenges during the national lockdown, and we encourage you to keep in contact with the College in order to support you fully.

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We will be giving an additional parental briefing on Thursday, 14 January to launch the Remote Learning Parental and Student Survey and to provide any relevant updates at government level.

In the meantime, a few updates and reminders:

- We hope that you have found time to listen to the student briefing from Wednesday which can be found on our website. I cannot stress enough how important daily exercise will be throughout this time and encourage students to take a good look at our virtual enrichment offer to support their weekly activities.
- For students who travel to College on a school bus, you will have received a letter from us regarding the updated arrangements regarding payments. Please ensure that you read this carefully.

Thank you once again for your on-going support. Do not hesitate to contact the College using the Year Group support email address for remote learning, or via Tutors or members of the Sixth Form Team where appropriate.

Yours faithfully
Rachel Hutchinson
Principal

Heather Lilley
Deputy Principal