



9 July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: End of year update

Whilst Mr Smyrk will be in touch with the broader arrangements for returning in September, we want to update you at the close of this academic year as a year team. It has been great seeing year 10 in school again and I hope they have found their five contact days useful.

Summer learning

Research has shown that during the six-week holidays, around two months of learning is lost and that it can take up to six weeks to get back to pre-holiday levels of learning and content knowledge. Whilst students have worked hard remotely, no doubt this gap will have been widened further due to the lockdown, not only for our students but for all young people in the country. Whilst we appreciate it is important for students to rest, relax and prepare for year 11, empirical evidence has shown that to negate the impact of the 'summer slide', students should complete around three hours of work per week in the holidays. This will hopefully mean that no learning time is lost in September and we can make rapid progress in preparation for the final exams. A small amount of work over the summer will really have a significant impact on students' progress in a years' time. Staff will not be setting work and students should use the resources available to them to revise and consolidate their learning from year 10.

GCSE Pod

The school has invested in an excellent resource called GCSE Pod. Please see the link here for more information: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_3s6KEbnPE. We strongly advise students to use this over the summer and next year, as it is an excellent revision tool, which uses a range of interactive and effective methods of learning such as podcasts, videos and quizzes. Students are encouraged to explore the resources available on the platform to see how they can best use it themselves to maximise their learning.

Exam proposals and provisional dates

We must stress that at present these are just proposals. We will be in touch when arrangements are finalised but there is important information for your consideration now. In particular we would like to draw your attention to the proposal to move the start of the exam series to after the May half term to around 7 June 2021. This will mean that exams will likely run well into July and could finish around the end of the school year. Please do not book any holidays during June and July term time until we have confirmation of these final exam dates.

Be The Best You Can Be

Below is a list of proposed changes to how specific subjects will be assessed:

GCSE English Language	Changes to spoken element – no longer needs recording and can be performed in front of teacher only
GCSE Computer Science	No need to complete the 20 hour programming practice
GCSE Sciences	Changes to the practical assessment – students now just have to watch someone else do it
GCSE History	Significant change – now only 1 mandatory unit and choice of 2 out of 3 others
GCSE Geography	Significant change – fieldwork dropped
GCSE Languages	Significant change to NEA for spoken element
GCSE Art	Significant change – no exam, assessed on portfolio only
GCSE DT/Film	NEA changes – do not need to use the equipment – can watch others/mock-up the practical bits
GCSE Music	NEA has been amended
GCSE Drama	No requirement to watch live performance – NEA has changed

Revision and September

We will be in touch in September with information about revision classes, and hopefully an update and confirmation on other points in this correspondence. In the meantime, I wish you an enjoyable break if you are lucky enough to have some time off, or you are able to get away.

Finally, thank you again for supporting and maintaining our students' learning throughout these difficult few months.

Best wishes

Mr S Smith
Director of KS4

Miss A Bryant
Head of Year 10