

04 December 2020

Dear Parents/Carers of Year 11 students,

I hope you are all well and looking forward to having some semblance of a break over the Christmas period.

I am writing to inform you of the recent Department for Education's (DfE) decision concerning GCSE 2021 examination series and information regarding technical, vocational and apprenticeship pathways Post 16.

GCSE Examinations 2021 Update

As you are fully aware your child is in the process of revising hard for their mock GCSE examinations with round 1 commencing Monday 7th December.

Students have been fully briefed with the official JCQ (*Joint Council of Qualifications*) examination conduct guidelines. Students also understand the importance of revision to help with knowledge retention and skill development.

The DfE and Ofqual announced yesterday that a revised programme of GCSE examinations will be scheduled for summer 2021. The package of measures is as follows:

1. The examination season has been delayed by 3 weeks to allow for extra teaching time.
2. A more generous grading system will be applied, *"in line with national outcomes from 2020, so students this year are not disadvantaged"*. Education Secretary Gavin Williamson
3. "Exam aids" will be provided for use in "some exams". We understand this might include items such as formula sheets.
4. Students will also be able to focus their revision with advance notice of certain topics which will be covered in GCSEs
5. Additional exam papers are being scheduled if a student misses an examination due to self-isolation.
6. Vocational and technical assessments will also be adapted but this has not yet been confirmed.

We will update parents and students as soon as we receive any further updates.

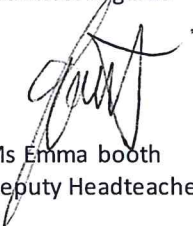
The biggest message we have articulated to students recently is to **'focus on the mock examinations'**. Teachers will be able to determine knowledge gaps following analysis of the papers and this will therefore assist planning in preparation for the examinations next summer. Please can I urge parents to reiterate this message at home. It is important that students give their 100% best shot, for the mock examinations.

Apprenticeships: A Guide for Parents

I have attached an official brochure from the National Apprenticeship Service that summarise the options available to your child Post 16 should they want to take the vocational / technical route. Please look at this with your child as it contains practical advice and guidance about securing a Post 16 pathway that is suited to your child's aptitude, skills and dreams.

As always, I wish you all the best.

Warmest regards



Ms Emma booth
Deputy Headteacher

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