



13 January 2021

Dear Parents and Year 11 Students,

GCSEs and Practice Exams

We know that this must be a very testing time to be a student in Year 11 with many questions about what will happen with the awarding of GCSE grades. Right now, the key for all of our students is to stay engaged and keep completing the work set on ClassCharts. This is important so that they can get some breadth and depth of study in preparation for assessment and grade award later in the year.

It is equally important that this level of study and learning continues so that the students have as solid a foundation as possible for any future study and development, be this academic or vocational.

We had scheduled to hold our internal practice examinations week commencing 25th January and these have now been postponed. As and when we know more about the date and conditions for a return to school, we will consider all of the possible alternatives which may or may not include another set of practice examinations. The uncertainty of this is obviously unhelpful, but we want to be absolutely sure we focus our students' effort on where it will be most beneficial.

Whatever the next few months may bring, we will give the students calm, well informed and timely advice as and when it comes to us as a firm plan, so that they can prepare for their return and the final weeks of the GCSE courses.

In the meantime, ClassCharts study and subsequent tasks, as directed by their teacher, has to be their priority.

This last weekend, there has been a lot of unhelpful 'noise' in the national press and on social media about the exams, their structure, who will mark them and so much more. For all of us involved in education, either as a student, parent or professional, we have to stress that this is all speculation and must be put to one side.

In time (and as yet we do not know when), we will get full guidance from the exam regulator Ofqual and only then we will know the assessment framework, process and the expectations of students and school staff.

We will do everything we can to support Year 11 students in the weeks and months to come, please be reassured and stress this to your son/daughter and as always, please don't hesitate to get in touch, particularly if they are struggling. Please also strongly encourage them to engage fully in the personal mentor calls.

Kind regards

Mr J Lewis

Head of School