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6th January 2021

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Re. Public Examinations (6th January 2021)

I would like to provide you with more information about the sitting of public examinations in 2021 following the announcement of the most recent national lockdown and a statement today from Gavin Williamson, Secretary of State for Education.

January 2021 Public Examinations

For months our staff and students have been making thorough preparations for public examinations in a variety of vocational subjects and qualifications this month. Yesterday, school and college leaders were formally given the responsibility to decide whether these examinations should take place in our centres.

I have decided, in consultation with colleagues that these public examinations **will continue** to take place following the previously published timetable.

While I accept that bringing students on-site at the moment will cause some concerns, my judgement is that there may be greater damage caused by cancelling these exams at such short notice. Not only have staff and students prepared thoroughly for these exams but we have allocated appropriate facilities and resources to ensure the exams can be conducted safely and we also still await clarification on how vocational qualifications such as BTECs will be assessed in the summer.

The government has confirmed that students who do not sit these examinations will not be disadvantaged, but we do not know at this stage what alternative arrangements will be made to ensure that this is the case.

The school is publishing up-to-date timetables for all candidates which reflect some changes to exam locations that we have made to maximise safety and efficiency.

Summer 2021 Public Examinations

The government have announced today more details about the arrangements for summer examinations this year. All GCSE, A and AS Level examinations have been cancelled for 2021 and grades will be calculated instead by school staff – centre assessment grades.

The Department for Education have said that schools will be provided with detailed support, training and guidance on how these grades will be reached and have committed to not applying algorithms which led to significant issues in the summer of 2020.

While we wait for these details, school staff will continue to deliver relevant subject content to examination classes and provide opportunities for assessment and engagement gaining further evidence of the capabilities of our students.

The status of the March mock examinations for Year 11 and Year 13 will now require further consideration. Much depends on whether students will be back in school, as we all hope, by March as well as the details of what kind of evidence we are entitled to draw on for centre assessment grades.

Our teaching staff now begin the process of reaching centre assessment grades alongside the crucial role of providing remote learning. It is likely that this will take months and will involve various checks and balances by the school structure and through national benchmarking.

Please can I request that students and/or parents/carers do not make any contact with teachers about the setting of grades. This is a professional judgement that we need to reach with objectivity and a clear rationale.

Thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes



Mr Jeremy Scott
Headteacher