



12th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Cancelled Exams and Remote Learning January 2021

I hope this finds you well after what was a very challenging and unsettling start to the school term and to the new year. I can imagine the past few days may have been extremely difficult for you all as you try to help your son/daughter cope with the rapid and unexpected changes to their education and exams. After speaking with students last week and after holding a virtual assembly for the year group, I am very aware of the mixed feelings they may have about the situation and our thoughts are with them during this time.

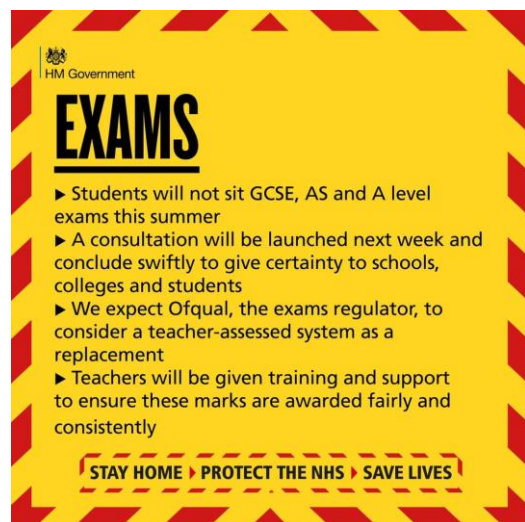
For these reasons, I thought I would get in touch with you early this week to confirm some of the arrangements for Sixth Form moving forward in the hope that it offers some further clarity and reassurance.

Exams

Following the move to remote learning it has been decided that the mock exams which were due to take place for Year 12 and Year 13 over the next few weeks be cancelled. For Year 12 these will be rearranged later in the term or year and for Year 13 we will await further news from the government before deciding if they should be rearranged.

If your son/daughter was due to sit a BTEC exam this January, you will have received notification last week of the school's decision to withdraw students. This was a difficult decision, but one which school feel is the best option under the current circumstances.

Following the announcements last week and the statement by Gavin Williamson, it is now clear that the A-Level exams planned for this summer will no longer go ahead. It is likely that this will be the case for BTEC and vocational exams, however I still await confirmation of this. The poster below has been released by the government to provide some information and a summary of the current situation with regards to A-Levels:



Although this has provided some answers it is still early days and unfortunately, I have no other information to give you at this stage. Further advice and information will be provided to schools once the consultation has taken place and Ofqual have made their plans, hopefully this will not take too long. Once received, school will have to follow their instruction and I will then let you and the students know how this affects them moving forwards. In the meantime, all Year 13 students have been advised to continue to engage with their online lessons as normal.



Remote/Online Learning

In Mr Garrity's bulletin to all parents on Friday he confirmed that all year groups will now have access to live or interactive lessons with their teachers for the rest of this half term. As a result, all Sixth Formers are to follow their timetable and to ensure that they are online and engaging with their teachers during their usual lesson slots. Mr Garrity's bulletin also outlined how remote learning will look from now on and this will apply to Sixth Form as well as all other year groups across the school:

How Remote Learning Will Look:

Teachers will conduct live and/or interactive lessons for every student in all year groups for every lesson. As in an ordinary classroom situation, the way a lesson is delivered will suit the content/objectives of the lesson. Teachers will be 'present' on TEAMS for every lesson and may conduct a totally live lesson; they may set a pre-recorded LOOM and then be available to answer questions during the lesson; or they may ask students to do an independent activity but again be present on TEAMS to support students. There will be times where a teacher will turn their video off and 'mute' themselves whilst students complete their learning.

In addition to the above, Sixth Formers will also be required to keep on top of their independent learning and wider reading which is a vital part of the A-Level and Vocational courses. For advice on what this should include, students are advised to speak to their individual subject teachers.

Attendance

Registers will be taken at the start of each live lesson to ensure student engagement is monitored and to offer support to any students who may be struggling with remote learning. If students are unable to attend any of their online sessions, they will need to contact Mrs Thrupp (Sixth Form Administrator) who can then notify their individual subject teachers.

Timings of the Day

To accommodate remote learning, the timings of the day have changed slightly to ensure that students are getting adequate breaks from the screen and to get up and move/get a drink. The following will apply from Monday 11th January:

09.05-09.55 - Lesson 1 on TEAMS

10.05-10.55 - Lesson 2 on TEAMS

10.55-11.15 - Morning Break

11.15-12.05 - Lesson 3 on TEAMS

12.15-13.05 - Lesson 4 on TEAMS

13.05-13.40 - Lunch Break

13.40-14.30 - Lesson 5 on TEAMS

14.30-16.00 - Students can take part in our Co-Curricular Activities outlined below or complete Literacy and Numeracy tasks in KS3 or regular homework in KS4 and KS5 outlined below. Staff will make Safe and Well Calls during this time. Most students will receive a call once a fortnight. In some circumstances students will receive a weekly call.

The Sixth Form tutor team will continue to telephone their tutees on a fortnightly basis to conduct wellbeing checks. There will be virtual tutorials and assemblies which will take place twice a week for Sixth Formers. Further details regarding the dates and times of these sessions will be issued to students later this week.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Mr Walker (Deputy Head of Sixth Form) if you have any queries regarding your son/daughter's Sixth Form experience or if any additional support is needed during this time.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L Allen

Head of Sixth Form