



8 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I write to you as we reach the end of our first week of this current national lockdown, to update you on some key points of information. As before, I have sub-headed the sections so you do not need to read aspects that are not applicable to you.

Information about the provision for key workers has been sent separately, please contact us if you feel you should have received details but have not.

Remote Learning

We are very pleased with the overall picture of students' engagement in their remote learning. Staff feedback is overwhelmingly positive about their punctuality, contribution and submission of work. This is really important for all year groups so thank you for your support of the environment and motivation required to get these habits in place.

I attach to this letter the expectations & protocols for students in Microsoft Teams lessons. These are non-negotiable for student involvement, please ensure your son/daughter understands them. We know that all year groups really value this aspect of their learning. As previously explained it is dependent on a code of conduct, just as learning in College does, which is mutually respectful and purposeful.

This and other highly valued forms of learning are part of a successful picture that we see students enjoying and in which they are succeeding; video explanations, collaborative documents, written work, creative and active tasks. It is important they get a variety and that they have a balance of screen time and other tasks. We are working hard at creating this quality and balance; we know the students are equally working hard at ensuring their learning remains focused and on track.

We know it's different, we know it's hard, we know it's not the same as being in school. They are doing really well, we are proud of them.

Examination Year Groups

As you will be aware, the Secretary of State confirmed this week that this summer's GCSE and A-Level exams will not take place. He also announced that a "Teacher Assessment" would be used to generate grades for students and that the government and Ofqual (the exams regulator) would provide appropriate training and guidance.



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Other than this, no other detail was provided about how this system will work or how BTEC/NCFE grades will be awarded. We have included a few FAQs below and will continue to update you as and when we know more.

What do we currently know?

We now know that some sort of “Teacher Assessment” will be required for each student’s exam entry. We believe Ofqual will launch a two-week consultation next week to help devise the system of teacher assessment and hopes to reveal the final plan by the end of February if a consensus can be reached. It is likely to involve a “combination of evidence”. We will take our full part in that consultation, as we did last year; including the inclusion of exam year groups other than 11 and 13. We will provide more information to students and parents when there is greater clarity in relation to this system.

My son/daughter’s mock exam results were disappointing.

Will these be used to decide their “Teacher Assessed Grade”?

Students almost always make considerable progress between mock exams and their final exams. At the moment we don’t know exactly how the “Teacher Assessed Grade” will be generated but it is most likely to consider a range of different aspects and will not rely on one single piece of evidence.

Once Ofqual and the government have provided clarity, we will decide whether or not to schedule an additional set of mock exams later this year. Students will currently be receiving feedback from their teacher relating to areas of strength and weakness from work submitted on Firefly. For Year 13, who have not yet had a Parents’ Evening, we will aim to build in an opportunity for parental feedback during Term 4.

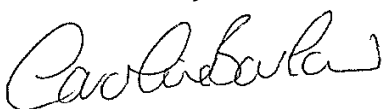
What should my son/daughter do in the meantime?

Given the current uncertainty, it is critically important that all students completing courses this year attend all online lessons, submit work to the best of their ability and continue to revise previously taught content. As far as we are concerned, it is very much “business as usual” in respect to completion of remote learning.

In this situation last year Ofqual were very clear that parents and students should not approach teachers or the College for details about students’ predicted grades or estimated outcomes. This must also apply in these circumstances.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the College and our young people. We do appreciate how hard it is to manage your own work and other commitments alongside young people who are remote learning and managing their own emotions at this time. There will be good days and not so good days for us all. Thank you for helping our community continue to be a positive and mutually supportive place to be.

Yours sincerely



MS C BARLOW
Headteacher