

28 August 2020

TO ALL Y11 PARENTS/CARERS

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been wonderful to meet Y11 learners returning to the academy after such a long period of disrupted learning. Following the issues with the 2020 GCSE qualifications, many Y11 learners may feel concerned about what the future holds for them. I have asked learners to let me as Principal and our fantastic team of staff handle any exam concerns and worries. I can assure learners and their families that they will not be disadvantaged by the current issues and should concentrate on fulfilling their dreams and aspirations in life.

Our focus this term is on ensuring we make up any gaps in knowledge and understanding through the highest quality teaching. A video will be available on our website shortly which will outline our approach to learning and teaching and give you guidance on how to support your son/daughter through Y11. This video will also explain a little more about the advantages of the new pathway system in Y11.

Due to the bubble arrangement and COVID-19 risk assessment, we do not plan to run extension activities on Wednesday afternoons until after October half term. In the meantime, Y11 learners will receive additional practice to complete at home during this time. This will support their independent learning and long term memory. We are working towards making a range of videos for learners to access which will model step by step examples for them to follow. A focus on this material will ensure we are well prepared should a local lockdown close the academy for a period of time and ensure our learners are not disadvantaged in the lead up to their exams in 2021.

Following their success on their BTEC Business modules and Engineering modules in Y10, learners are expected to complete their courses early allowing additional time in the summer term to concentrate on other subjects. After half term we will be running small group therapy groups in mathematics, science and English. The work carried out in these therapy groups will be focussed on filling specific gaps in knowledge and understanding. These sessions will run up to the exam period and will be complemented with career advice and wellbeing sessions.

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The academy has signed up to the government's tutoring scheme. Once more details become available from the government we will let families know how to access this additional support.

We are awaiting more details about the 2021 exam timetable. It is our understanding that exams will be pushed back to allow more teaching time. The English literature exam will have reduced content and we are currently looking at which aspects of the specification will advantage our learners the most. The length of the other exam papers will not be altered. However, it is likely that the exam boards will look closely at grade boundaries to ensure this cohort of learners are not disadvantaged.

To prepare for possible centre assessment, the academy will prepare a series of assessments in all examination subjects. We will use a comparative assessment technique to moderate these assessments and to rank the year group in each subject. Retrieval practice and modelling will be used to ensure learners are well prepared for these assessments and they will sit assessments under examination conditions. It is very important that all learners apply themselves completely to these assessments to ensure they show their full capabilities. This is their insurance strategy in case there are any cancellations of the 2021 examinations. An assessment timetable for the year will be issued following Y11 assemblies which will explain the process clearly to learners and enable them to ask questions.

Our Pastoral Team will ensure families are kept up to date throughout this important year and they invite you to ask questions should you have any queries or concerns:

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We are absolutely committed to doing all that we can to support Y11 learners through this academic year and give them the very best experiences to support them to achieve their dreams and aspirations. We will of course keep in touch with you with any further updates

Please do not hesitate to contact the academy if you need any further support.

Yours sincerely



Mrs J McGuirk
Principal