

Dear Parents/ Carers,

I hope you are all well and keeping safe. I want to update you with any news about year 11 students, including the progress we are making in setting Centre Assessed Grades and what conversations we have had regarding the year 11 Prom that is, rightfully, so important to the students.

Centre Assessed GCSE Grades:

As you already know, schools are in the very unusual position of setting each student a Centre Assessed Grade because they will not sit exams this year. This is not difficult, in that we know our students very well and have a lot of data and other information that we can draw upon to establish the grades. Many students have already undertaken units of exams and controlled assignments, and these also provide us with invaluable information as to what each student is likely to achieve overall. We have now started this process and I want to reassure you that it is extremely thorough and each grade will be closely scrutinised by the teacher, the head of department and by the senior team as a whole. The WJEC have issued very detailed and specific instructions to schools and are very clear about the conditions under which grades will be awarded. The exam board will undertake its own moderation and scrutiny when analysing the grades schools enter. I will keep you updated, but as you may be aware, the WJEC and Qualifications Wales have instructed schools that under no circumstances should any potential grades be discussed with any person outside the school. It is also important to remember that it is the exam board, not the school, who will validate and agree the grades, so until August, when we receive the outcome from the WJEC, all grades will be provisional.

Vocational Subjects:

Until now, we did not have information about how grades for vocational subjects will be awarded, but following guidance from Pearson, we are now in a position to update you on the arrangements for certification. BTECs are made up of units that combine to give an overall grade. For year 11, the units they completed before 20th March (when the school building closed) will be graded as normal, and the ones they did not complete by 20th March will receive a Centre Assessed Grade (CAG). This is the same process as the GCSE qualifications.

Results day:

As I said earlier, schools will receive the overall school results from the exam board later this summer, when they will be awarded to students. We do not, as yet, know how results day will be organised, but I would like the occasion to be as close to normal as possible. I will keep in touch with you and the students about this and let you know when we are in a position to think about how students will collect and celebrate their results.

May to September:

This is a very strange time for year 11 in particular, and although some will understandably feel relief at not sitting exams, this period of time is far from stress free for a lot of children. Many are feeling cheated by the fact that they are not going to experience the post - exam high and they will miss out on their last day at school. I want to reassure them that we have not gone away and are here to talk to them at any point. Mrs Arthur has contacted the Maes Manor Hotel and as I promised them in March, we will be having the year 11 Prom as soon as it is possible to arrange it. It won't be the end of June, but we will organise one. In the meantime, each student will have a call from myself or the senior team in the next two weeks to talk about next year. Many will return to start their A Levels or vocational courses and we will be advising the students on any preparation when we speak to them. We are planning taster sessions for lessons and will also be guiding the students towards preparatory work for their chosen key stage subjects. They may not want to hear this at the moment, but we will start to talk to you about this over the next few weeks. Students who have chosen other pathways will be able to talk about their choices, whether they are going to college or plan to begin employment. We will be advising all of them. What is important, is that we will be making regular contact between now and September. No one needs to feel cut off.

I hope you all have a good Bank Holiday weekend. Staff are here if you need to discuss anything with us, and the students also have the emergency contact number should they need to use it. I send my very warmest wishes and hope you all stay safe and well.

Kindest regards,
Mrs Harding