



January 2021

Dear families,

## Year 11 & 13 Examinations

I must apologise for the number of communications that you are receiving from me at present, but the government continue to make announcements and statements that affect your child's education and I feel it is important that I keep you as well informed as possible.

Very often throughout this pandemic the government's announcements to the press do not reflect the detail that is subsequently published in the official guidance to Principals and schools. Therefore, I need to clarify the comments that the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson made in the House of Commons yesterday regarding Summer Examinations.

All GCSE and A Level examinations due to take place in the summer have been cancelled. However, what is not yet clear is what they will be replaced with. It has been suggested that a more rigorous teacher assessment grade may be an option. Ofqual, who oversee national examinations, are going to release the process on behalf of the government in the next couple of weeks. Coursework for GCSEs and A Levels must still be completed.

BTEC examinations due to take place in the summer have not been cancelled as yet. There has also been some confusion regarding BTEC examinations due to take place in February. I can now confirm that the BTEC examinations due to take place in February are also cancelled. I have decided to cancel these as the infection rate within Sandwell remains very high and therefore feel it is unwise to bring large numbers of students together to sit in an examination hall for extended periods of time.

This is a very difficult time for all students and particularly for students in examinations year groups. However, there is one thing that is certain at this time; students now have a large amount of control over their education. If teacher assessed grades are the method that the government use, then there is more opportunity for students to impact positively on their grade.

There are several actions that students can take immediately to ensure that their teachers can continue to assess their progress. These are,

- Attend all live lesson scheduled to take place.
- Engage positively in all lessons.
- Complete all work to the best of their ability.
- Complete any outstanding coursework to the highest possible standard.
- Know what their target grade is and what they need to do to achieve it.

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Teachers' assessments will be based on evidence that is in front of the teacher and it is important that students do their best to provide as much evidence as possible of the progress that they are making. Teachers will want to award the best grades possible, but they can only do so if the evidence around attendance, completion of work and positive engagement in lessons allows it.

Once we have received the full guidance from the Department for Education I will write again, in the meantime please continue to support your child by ensuring that they engage with all learning opportunities so that we can support them to achieve the best results possible.

Kind regards,



Mr D Irish  
Principal

WE **MUST** KEEP ON  
PROTECTING EACH OTHER



HANDS



FACE



SPACE



STAY ALERT TO  
THE SYMPTOMS

HIGH TEMPERATURE OR  
NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH OR  
LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?



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[nhs.uk/coronavirus](https://nhs.uk/coronavirus)

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