



17th May 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

I write to provide an update of the process for awarding grades this summer and plans for school provision over the remainder of the term.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for your support of the ongoing assessment processes that have been taking place since before Easter. As well as further strengthening the evidence base for centre assessed grades, it has been an important opportunity for students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills across the curriculum and has been key to informing planning for progress during these final months of the academic year. Preparing students as well as possible for the next step in their education, employment or training remains a key priority.

With respect to the awarding of grades this summer, we have now published our Centre Policy documentation in line with the latest guidance and direction from the national exam regulators and Department for Education, which is available on our website. This sets out how we as an organisation will work with the awarding bodies to provide robust, quality assured and evidence-based grades for students. We will use a broad evidence base of pupil work to inform the process which will appropriately reflect the assessment objectives for each specific qualification. We will be asked to demonstrate that the work submitted as evidence is the student's own work and therefore require significant elements of it to be gathered under high levels of control, for example in exam conditions; and submitted grades will be subject to external scrutiny. There is further national guidance for parents and students available through the Joint Council for Qualifications and individual awarding bodies.

As we look beyond this process to the remainder of the Summer term, I would like to offer some clarity around arrangements. The Department for Education has stated its expectation for schools to continue to provide access to education for school leavers beyond the submission window for centre assessed grades. However, schools have been given flexibility to interpret how best to support students during this period and it is acknowledged that this may not involve full-time on-site attendance or a usual timetable experience.

We are currently finalising plans to provide a high-quality transition to a more substantially remote and independent learning package for students in both Year 11 and Year 13. Further details about what this will involve will be forthcoming from the respective Year teams shortly. It is essential that students engage with the opportunities presented to them during this period to prepare as well as possible for their next steps. They will also need to be available to the school should there be any need to address gaps in evidence for awarding grades or be part of any specific and targeted support until the last Friday in June.

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Results days for Year 11 and 13 will be earlier than usual and in the same week. Further details will follow with regards to the arrangements including for enrolment to SM6, but please note these dates in your diary in anticipation.

Year 13: Tuesday 10th August

Year 11: Thursday 12th August

For Year 10, the last half term would ordinarily provide an opportunity for work experience. Given the disruption and unpredictable nature of events, we are working on finalising a virtual offer this year. This will be an exciting opportunity to develop wider knowledge and skills using a highly regarded online platform and we look forward to sharing further details shortly.

I am incredibly proud of the way our St Mary's students have responded to the challenges of the last 14 months and continue to represent themselves during this current period. They have been a great credit to themselves and to the school. I look forward to celebrating their achievements alongside them in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Perry'.

Mr David Perry