

## **Year 11 Parents' Information Evening 2020/21: Frequently Asked Questions**

**How will students be assessed and their progress monitored over the course of Year 11 and what plans are in place should Covid-19 impact on the terminal examination season as it did this year.**

*Students will be assessed regularly throughout the year and this information will be reported to parents throughout the year. There will be two trial examination seasons (one in November and one in February) where students will sit socially distanced core subject papers in English, maths and science in the examination hall. In addition, monthly in-class assessment grades will be reported in December, January, March and April. In effect, parents will receive six current 'working at' grades over the course of the year, rather than three interim grades and two trial exam grades as previously. The impact of this is two-fold: firstly, it means that we will have a strong and robust data set for each student should the examinations not run next year. Secondly, however, as we hope the GCSE examinations will take place as normal next summer, our students will have had plenty of practice, both in-class and in the examination hall, of completing assessment tasks under timed conditions thus meaning they are very well prepared for the terminal examination season.*

**Could we have a clear update on the new curriculum changes to specific subjects where criteria has been changed ?**

*We are presently collating the changes and putting them into a single document to share with parents and students as soon as we can. All changes should be ratified by the end of October and so please expect to hear from us later this month with an examination and assessment overview for each subject area. We can confirm that adjustments are being made to some examinations to take into account time away from the classroom. We are fully aware of these changes and will be adapting our teaching and assessment procedures to take full account of these alterations.*

**When will Year 11 trial exams be held?**

*Trial exams, where students will experience sitting full papers in an examination room, will take place in November and February for core subjects, i.e. English, maths and science.*

**If trial exams are brought forward, is there any adjustment likely given the students will have studied even less of the curriculum than if they were taking them in January?**

*The papers set will be based on the topics that students have studied so far.*

### **What are the dates for the actual GCSE examinations?**

*At present, we are anticipating that examinations will take place at the usual time (during May and June). It is possible that they will happen later. Should this change, we will let you know as soon as we can.*

### **If the GCSE's don't happen will they go off course work?**

*Should the summer 2021 examinations be cancelled, Ofqual and the DFE will inform us of what we need to do. We do not know at this stage what this might look like and it would be wrong to guess at it. Until we are told more, we are assuming that the examination seasons will proceed as planned. We will, of course, inform you immediately of any changes to this arrangement.*

### **Can students drop a subject to concentrate on a core subject that they are struggling with?**

*We must encourage all students to maintain their GCSE options as we do in all other years. In the current climate, we cannot guarantee that we will have the capacity to staff additional classes and this means, as always, we cannot agree to any option drops apart from in very exceptional circumstances.*

### **Do students have to continue to attend PE lessons for the remainder of the year or can they use this time to be given additional tuition to catch up on other subjects?**

*We have a statutory duty to offer PE lessons to all year groups. We will allow some students to study rather than participate in PE later in the year but this has to be managed in the right way. When this happens, that doesn't mean that we can offer 'additional tuition', it just means that we can offer a supervised study space.*

**When do Year 11 students have to make choices re A level subjects and what support is available to students who really have no idea what options to take?**

*Sixth Form information will go out in October (probably w/b 19th October) and will include a timeline for applications for our sixth form. Students looking at other institutions and options need to be proactive about looking at websites to ascertain when their particular deadlines are. All students in Year 11 have access to a careers' advisor and each student will be offered an interview over the coming weeks and months.*

**What resilience plans are HCCS putting in place to manage the impact of any further potential disruption due to COVID?**

*The school has planned for a number of different scenarios in case of disruption due to the pandemic. We are now sharing all work and resources via Google Classrooms so that students can keep in touch with their studies even if they are not in school. Should we have to go back into lockdown we will endeavour to maintain a proportion of live contact via Google Meet (provided that a specialist member of staff is available).*

**We just want to know what as parents we can do to assist him.**

Talking to your child about their subjects and their learning is always helpful. Encourage them to start revising now, not just for the forthcoming trial exams but for the 'real' exams at the end of the academic year. Little and often is the way forward. We are using tutor time to promote good study and revision habits and teachers will include revision activities in their lessons and in homework tasks. It is true to say, however, that students that supplement this with their own study programme are the ones that are the most successful in public examinations. Please read the attached 'Making It Stick' document, which gives further advice on effective study habits.

**What positive steps are being taken to promote positivity and mental health wellbeing?**

*There is a strong desire from the learning intervention team, tutors, and Student Services to support all of our young people as they return to learning in a school environment. We are fully aware of the need to support Year 11 in particular. Tutors and teachers are encouraged to be positive and to limit the stress and pressure that comes with reaching the end of the secondary school learning journey. All students*

*have recourse to a tutor and a head of house should they need to talk about issues pertaining to the uncertainty around the next few months.*