

17th April 2020

Dear Year 11 Parents/Carers

I am writing to remind you that the summer term commences for students on **Monday 20th April**. The school continues to be 'closed' to most students, but we will be setting work and keeping in touch as best we can. We know that it can be difficult motivating your children to complete the work set and we very much appreciate your efforts and support.

We do not yet know when school will re-open. There has been some media speculation, but we believe it will be some time before schools start to re-open, and even then it will be a gradual process. We will let you know as soon as we have more information.

In the meantime, we have been working over Easter to plan for the coming term as a 'virtual school'. This letter and the attached, updated guidance set out our expectations for students and what they can expect from us. This situation is far from ideal, so we must all continue to just do our best. Thank you for your patience whilst we have adjusted to this new way of working.

Finishing Year 11 and preparing for the next step

Year 11 will finish their GCSE study formally on **Thursday 7th May**. Until this point, they may continue to pull together a portfolio of work or complete any work suggested by teachers. The latter is particularly important if they wish to continue study of a subject next year.

After this, departments will be asked to set A-Level preparation work for those students who have chosen their Post-16 subject options.

Year 11 students will 'break up' for summer **at the end of June**, which was the scheduled date of the final GCSE exam.

If students would like to present a portfolio of work for internal accreditation, they will be able to do so when school returns.

For those students who are not planning to continue into A-Level study, we will offer a Springboard package which will be led by our Careers Advisor Liz Lloyd. For those students who are planning to study A-Levels at another setting, we will offer the opportunity to take part in the preparation work for those subjects that are offered at Farmor's. This will be coordinated by Sarah Crawford, Deputy Head of Sixth Form, who will be communicating with you shortly. You can contact her on scrawford@farmors.gloucs.sch.uk



Update on the awarding of grades for Year 11

Further to the information sent out on 7th April, there has been little more information from Ofqual.

For those students in Y11, Y12 and Y13, we will be spending the next few weeks looking at their performance over the length and breadth of their examination courses and preparing to recommend grades to the exam boards. Further advice from Ofqual states that these grades should be based on 'a holistic professional judgement, balancing the different sources of evidence'.

I know there has been some anxiety over what evidence will be used; I can assure you that we will be following the guidance that it is 'a realistic judgement of the grade each student would have been most likely to get if they had taken their exam(s) ...this summer.' We will be working with departments on a rigorous and fair process before meeting the submission deadline at the end of May.

Ofqual has stated that schools cannot share the recommended grades with students or parents. They have also issued a firm warning to parents that they must not attempt to influence this process, and that doing so may be considered as malpractice. We will keep you informed about how this process will be carried out but please do not contact teachers about this as they have been instructed to not discuss this matter.

It has been confirmed that student grades will be released on the dates in the summer scheduled for exam results to be distributed. We will let you know more about how these grades will be released in due course.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Evans

Headteacher

Further information

A YouTube video on hand washing can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQCP7waTRWU&feature=youtu.be&safe=true>

More information about the virus and how to prevent its spread can be found at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

More information about how to self-isolate can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>