

Wednesday 5 May 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

RE: Exams Update

All the staff at St Mark's would like to start by thanking you for your ongoing support in what has been an unprecedented period of upheaval for our Year 11 and Year 13 students. Since the changes to summer GCSE, A-Level and BTEC assessment for Summer 2021 were announced in January 2021, your child has had to cope with a number of uncertainties and I always impressed by the resilience and adaptability that they show in their approach to the new challenges that they are faced with.

Since last writing to you to outline our approach to preparing for Teacher Assessed Grades, your child will have been offered a personalised intervention programme including Saturday and Easter School Sessions to support them in their subject studies. They will have also undertaken their first evidence gathering assessment and will be preparing for their coming assessments with their teachers.

Please do talk to your child about how they are preparing for these evidence gathering assessments and remind them that they still have a number of opportunities to improve upon their grade.

We appreciate that this year has been very tough for everyone including our year 11 and 13 students in particular and some students are struggling with the challenges of this new assessment method. Please do communicate with your child's coaching and Progress Leader to ensure that the school is aware of any mitigating circumstances which may impact on their ability to perform in their assessments.

As outlined in previous letters your child will have a minimum of 4 opportunities in each subject to complete a piece of work that they will use to create a portfolio of evidence. Teachers will use these portfolios to decide your child's grade in their subject.

- All the work that they complete on TEAMS, in lessons and during their intervention sessions, will help them build towards and prepare for these pieces of work.

Principal Hannah Fahey

- The windows for each evidence gathering opportunity will be as follows:
 - 1st Piece will be completed by 31st March
 - 2nd and 3rd Piece by 10th May
 - Final Piece by 28th May

Teachers will be able to give students grades for individual pieces of work that you will use for your portfolio of evidence once these have been marked and moderated. This will help your child know how they are progressing so that they can know what they need to do to improve.

However, it is really important for you and your child to understand that any grades you are given are only for that individual piece of work. These grades are not the same as your child's Teacher Assessed Final Grade (TAG) and teachers will not be able to share these with parents or students.

Results Days:

We will be sending you more detailed information about the details of results days following the changes to Government Guidance as the Lockdown Restrictions ease. In the meantime, please ensure that you have the following dates set aside:

- **Results Day for Year 13:**
 - A-Level and Other Level 3 BTEC Results – 10th August 2021
- **Results Day for Year 11:**
 - GCSE and Other Level 2 BTEC Results – 12th August 2021

Finishing Date for Year 11 and Year 13:

In a normal exam year, Year 11 and Year 13 students would experience study leave and sit exams throughout May and June. As a result of the changes to the examination system this year, and in recognition of the lost learning time that students have experienced we will be continuing to provide learning resources and opportunities for your child post May Half-Term.

Year 11:

Students will no longer be expected full time on site from Friday 28th May and will have a range of both online and in person opportunities in the final summer term.

Week Beginning Monday 7th June:

- A-Level and BTEC Bridging Projects set on TEAMS to prepare students for their Post-16 Courses
- PSHE Resources to support with Mental Health and Wellbeing.

During this week selected students may be invited in to catch up with missing evidence for their assessment portfolios. If your child receives an initiation to attend these sessions they will need to arrive in full school uniform.

Week Beginning Monday 14th June:

- Daily skills activities set online to support students to build employability and study skills
- PSHE Resources to support with Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Week Beginning Monday 21st June:

- Onsite preparation for Post-16 Study Skills and Subject Workshops.

Week Beginning Monday 5th July:

- 6th Form Taster Week including:
 - University talks
 - Team building sessions
 - Taster lessons
 - Lifeology and skills
 - 'The Big Interview'
- It is recommended that students prepare to bring their Bridging Projects with them for this week to demonstrate their commitment to independent learning at Sixth Form.
- ***Students will need to attend in Smart Business Dress.***

Year 13:

Students will no longer be expected full time on site from Friday 28th May and will have a range of online resources provided to engage them over the summer term.

We would recommend student use this time to catch up on lost learning time and, once lockdown restrictions ease, visit higher education providers and open days that they could not see in person earlier this year.

Summer Term 2

- Skills activities set online to support students to build employability and study skills
- PSHE Resources to support with Mental Health and Wellbeing.

- Catch up resources for students cover any curriculum content not covered due to the pandemic
- ***During the week beginning Monday 7th June selected students may be invited in to catch up with missing evidence for their assessment portfolios.***

We wish all the Year 11 and Year 13 students the best of luck in their next endeavours and look forward to welcoming back all of Year 11 students who are returning for Sixth Form.

Thank you so much in advance for your ongoing support during this time.

With Love, Hope and Trust

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