

5<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Families,

## Re: The awarding of grades in the Summer

It has been an absolute pleasure to see so many students in school this week. I have been hugely impressed with the maturity and hard work of year 11 and 13 students. You will be aware that the government released some initial guidance regarding the awarding of grades this summer. I want to take this opportunity to inform you of our approach so that you can be reassured that students will get the results which reflect their talents and abilities. I will be following-up this letter with Information Evenings for Years 11 and 13 which will take place on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March. A separate invite letter will be sent out about this event.

## Principles

The principles which underpin the process I will describe below are:

- Clarity and simplicity – we want the process to be as clear and easily understood as possible.
- Transparency – we will be open about why we are doing what we are doing.
- Opportunity – students should have as much opportunity as possible to show us what they can do.
- Fairness - The grades students receive should be a reflection of their ability.
- Achievement – we need to give students a sense of satisfaction and provide them with the appropriate platform for their next steps.

I am also mindful of ensuring that we get the balance right between the wellbeing of young people and their families, and the need to set up a process that is fair and robust.

## Summary of the process

- Students will return to face-to-face teaching in the week beginning 8<sup>th</sup> March. In most subjects, there will be no new content covered after the week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Teachers will focus on the most important aspects of the course.
- Students will be required to sit formal internal assessments in May.\*
- These assessments will play a significant role when we consider students' final grades. However, these are assessments with a "safety net". Firstly, students will only be assessed on content which teachers have covered during the course.

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Secondly, from the point students return to school, teachers will focus on the topics which will be assessed. Thirdly, we will make adjustments to the grade boundaries in line with what could be reasonably expected from students given the challenges they have faced. Lastly, we will still take into account information from your NEAs, classwork and homework, where appropriate.

- These assessments will vary in length according to subjects. You will find out more in the week beginning the 15<sup>th</sup> March.
- We will have a Year 13 and 11 Parents Evening prior to the Easter break to enable parents and students to get a sense of where students are and to give advice on what you can do to maintain or improve your grades.

\*There will be no formal written assessment in Art, Textiles, Engineering, BTEC Physical Education and Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). We will ensure that the students are aware of deadlines and when we need to submit grades to the examination boards.

### Timeline

Date	Action
Week beginning 8 <sup>th</sup> March	Students return to face-to-face teaching. Teachers have been told to prioritise the teaching of the most important aspects of the course.
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> March	Parent and Student Information Evenings will outline specific details of how grades will be awarded.
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March	No new content will be taught in lessons after Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March. In some subjects, this may happen even earlier.
Late March	Parents Evenings for Years 11 and 13
Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> April to Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter holiday
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> April	First day back at school for the summer term
3 <sup>rd</sup> May – 24 <sup>th</sup> May	Internal Assessment Period – students expected in school during this period
Week beginning 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Return to school – a small number of students may be required to sit additional assessments if we need extra evidence to make a judgement about a student's grade in a particular subject. You will be given ample notice of when this will take place and what topics will be covered.

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Week beginning 7 <sup>th</sup> June	Leavers assemblies
Late June	We are likely to bring forward Sixth Form enrolment and begin year 12 early.
August	A-Level results released on 10 <sup>th</sup> August and GCSE results are due for release on 12 <sup>th</sup> August.

You will have several questions at this point. Please do bear with us and be patient over the next few weeks. For the moment, I have prepared an FAQs document below which I will add to over the next few weeks:

**1) Will Tytherington School be too harsh or too generous in the awarding of grades?**

*No. Although schools will be doing slightly different things, all of us will be following the same guidance. We will work collaboratively with other schools to moderate and quality assure our judgements. We will also be using assessments produced by the examination boards which most schools will be using. All schools are subject to the same quality assurance processes so we are very confident that the grades submitted will be a true reflection of talent.*

**2) Can you give us a bit more detail about what these assessments will look like?**

*Over the next few weeks, Mr Pilbury and I will be liaising with teachers to ensure that the assessments strike the right balance between being rigorous but also fair. You will only be tested on content that has been covered and we will indicate the topics which the assessments will cover. This will enable you to focus your revision.*

**3) What are my rights if I'm not happy about the grade I finally receive from the school?**

*We will try very hard beforehand to make sure that the grade we award is a true reflection of students' abilities. So, we will take into account your performance in the formal internal assessments as well as other information such as classwork, homework and any NEAs or coursework. We know that the lockdown period has affected people in different ways so you must tell us if there is anything exceptional about your personal circumstances which may have affected your ability to engage with learning during this period.*

*There are two grounds on which you can appeal:*

- *If you think an administrative error has taken place in the submission and award of the grade. This is relatively straight forward to remedy if this has happened.*

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- *If you feel that the grade (s) that have been awarded are unfair, unjust and have not followed the process set out within the official guidance. In this instance, you will be able to appeal to the examination board. They will review the evidence and process we have used to issue the grade. They may choose to move grades down as well as up. There will be an opportunity to take examinations during an Autumn series. This will be free of charge.*

**4) Will the exams take place in the hall?**

*I anticipate that most of the exams will need to be in classrooms. We will ensure that students who would normally have exam access arrangements have the support they need.*

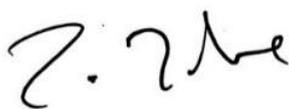
This is about as much as I can tell you at this point. You will find out more in the coming weeks. Please be aware that the examination boards have made it clear that students and parents should not attempt to influence the grades that are awarded by pressuring school staff. If I feel this is happening, then I have to report it to the examination board as a case of malpractice. Please trust us and our ability to run a fair and robust process.

In the meantime, please make sure that your son/daughter continues to study hard and comes to school. They will still be expected to complete any relevant NEAs (Non-Examined Assessment) and class/homework.

If you have any queries, please feel free to e-mail me.

Many thanks for your ongoing patience and support.

Yours sincerely,



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