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ELLIS
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Tuesday, 5th January 2021

Dear Pupil, Parent/Carer,

I wanted to write following the Prime Minister's announcement last night relating to the cancellation of examinations this summer.

In the coming days we will, no doubt, receive more information about the way in which grades will be calculated, but it seems sensible to expect that the process of deciding grades will be similar to those of Summer 2020. This involved using a range of evidence, including classwork, PPE results and, where appropriate, coursework.

Can I assure you all that Year 11 are in our thoughts. We know the disappointment that all pupils in Year 11 must have felt following this announcement. We were told that examinations were going ahead and to be told that they will not, will be upsetting and disheartening. I know that this year group in particular were very focussed on their examinations and on a daily basis were working extremely hard to achieve the very best grades for themselves.

Once the shock has worn off, I want to provide reassurance for all pupils and parents and would request that you fully consider the following points:

Your efforts in lessons and your hard work will be recognised. The work that you have already completed and the work you will complete over the next few months will make a difference. Your final grade will reflect your progress and your learning.

Your final results will not, in any way, prevent you from progressing and making choices about what you want to do next in your career. You can still progress to Sixth Form, college or apprenticeships in the same way, as well as other career choices that you might have. The most important message is this: **none of your ambitions for your future will be affected.** Your outcomes will count as real grades and therefore it is critical that you continue to learn, either remotely or when you are able to return to school.

The new way of awarding grades is fair. Teachers have to demonstrate that likelihood of you gaining a particular grade. This means we have to evidence



that your work meets the standard required for the award of a particular GCSE grade. Your work is reviewed and checked against standards of pupils' work in other schools. Your teachers are now very familiar with this and when you return will do everything they can to help you achieve the grade which reflects both your ability and hard work.

If you were not satisfied with your eventual grade and the process remains the same as last year, you will be able to appeal and take the examination again, usually in the Autumn.

The parents' evening on Thursday, 7th January 2021 still goes ahead as normal. It's really important that pupils and parents have a clear understanding of where you are in your learning and what steps you need to take to improve. Please book your appointment through the School Cloud App or contact the school to assist making the appointments for you.

Students who are still to receive a 1:1 career guidance interview to discuss their options will receive a link to a Teams meeting over the lockdown period to meet with an experienced careers practitioner. If students have any questions around next steps, please email Mr Brooke: Chris.Brooke@ellisguilfordschool.org.uk

I know it's a lot to ask, but please keep going. All of you are capable of achieving and gaining success in your GCSE exams! Once you've processed the change of plans from the government, I would urge you to continue with the remote learning and know that every piece of work you complete, every lesson that helps you to make progress in your learning will count towards any final grade that is awarded.

At the Ellis Guilford, we all genuinely feel for you all in this situation. But we all must be resilient, strong and determined to overcome this temporary challenge.

You will do it!

Yours sincerely,

Mr Chris Keen
Principal