

15 May 2020

Dear Year 11 Parents and Pupils,

I hope you are all well and managing to keep safe during this difficult time.

At the end of what would have been the first week of GCSE exams I felt it important to update you on a number of areas that have been affected by the national response to the ongoing COVID-19 emergency.

We remain extremely disappointed that all Year 11 pupils were not able to conclude their time at Harrytown in the traditional manner. As stated in my letter on 9 April, the period of final preparations for, completion of and reflection on performance in GCSE exams contains important experiences for all Year 11 pupils, which collectively help support their transition mindset to life after Harrytown. We have been informed that many of the Sixth Form Colleges have been directly in touch with those who have applied, while those seeking a training or apprenticeship provision may have been contacted in recent weeks. We hope all pupils are looking forward to their new challenge in September; hopefully many aspects of normality return by then. In the meantime, Year 11 Form Tutors have been trying to contact all pupils to support transition to Post-16 education or training. Please do not hesitate to contact us if additional support is needed as we endeavour to guide all pupils towards the next stage of their journey.

It has now been confirmed that GCSE results will be available on Thursday 20 August, which was the original planned date for their release. Year 11 Teachers have been busy analysing all work completed throughout GCSE studies to help determine predicted grades in each subject. As stated previously, we are not permitted to disclose this information to any pupil as it is subject to change by exam boards. Indeed, the exam regulator JCQ, has advised us that *"There may be instances where schools and colleges or teachers are put under external pressure from a candidate or their parent/guardian to influence the decision-making on a grade or rank order. Any external pressure must be reported to the exam board(s) who may investigate this as potential candidate malpractice"*. Please adhere to this guidance and respect the professionalism of all staff in this matter.

I am sure you watched with fascination the Prime Minister's statement on Sunday 10 May, detailing the road map out of lockdown. The plan states that all hotels, restaurants etc. will not be permitted to reopen until 4 July, at the earliest, which is after the date planned for the Year 11 Prom. Sadly, we have therefore been forced to cancel the event, which will be a disappointment to many pupils and staff. Hopefully, this will not come as a surprise to you as we need to prioritise the safety of all involved. As stated in my letter of 9 April, once the current situation has passed, we will endeavour to make provision for Year 11 to come together in celebration, as long as it is safe to do so.

Unfortunately, the bad news continues for those pupils who have ordered hoodies. The manufacturers are experiencing a delay in production due to COVID-19 and are unable to confirm a delivery date at this time. We continue to liaise with the company and when the hoodies arrive in school, we will make provision for safe collection.

'I have come that they have life and have it to the full' John 10:10

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Finally, I would like to thank those parents and pupils who have been in touch to pass on their support, best wishes and thanks during this challenging time. Please continue to keep all members of the Harrytown community in your prayers and stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Mr K Turmeau
Headteacher