



17th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Re: Additional INSET Afternoons

Happy St Patrick's Day to you all.

Today we are sharing our approach to the grading processes that we will be following this year to generate grades for Year 11 and 13 students (as well as a few others) this summer. Not for the first time in the last twelve months schools are being required to shoulder the burden of responsibility for areas of policy and practice that are way beyond the usual range, alongside the ongoing management of the return to school for all students. In this case, schools are effectively being required to design the entire process of awarding grades for public qualifications to students this summer (over 3,000 grades in total in our case), including the delivery of an entire assessment system that includes all the steps needed to ensure fairness and objectivity.

As such, we carry a very heavy responsibility in making sure that we get the process absolutely right for our students. Parents with children in these years will know all too well how 'high stakes' this feels, and I need to ask for the understanding of parents in other year groups in allocating a small amount of dedicated time in coming weeks to enable subject teams to work together to ensure that this can be delivered properly.

As such, we will be holding three 'INSET afternoons' on the following dates to create time to do this and award the objective and fair grades that these students deserve:

- Wednesday 24th March*
- Wednesday 12th May
- Thursday 27th May

**Year 11 will remain in school on Wednesday 24th March for a practice Maths assessment.*

**Year 8 students who are due to have a Covid test on the afternoon of the 24th will still need to attend their appointment. Depending on the time of their test, they can leave school at lunchtime and then come back into school just for their appointment, or if they will need to stay on site until their test there will be supervision for those students in the library.*

On these days students will be able to leave the school site at the beginning of lunch, although a limited lunch service will still be available for any students that wish to have lunch in school.

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As per the 'screen break' day before the return to school, we will share ideas and resources to support students to engage in positive and purposeful wider activity that broadens their horizons. Please note, however, that as part of the 'Stay at Home' order, students must return home immediately on leaving the school site.

I realise that, having had so long out of school, this may seem counter to our strong instincts to maximise the opportunities for young people in their education in response to the disruption that they have faced. As I have explained before, this is a 'long game' and we need to balance the priority of supporting our students to thrive in the years to come through investing in them over time (we have already made considerable plans in this regard) with the very significant short-term demands that have been placed on us to deliver the grading process this year for Year 11 and 13. The governing body have given their full support to these plans.

Thank you for your support on this, as ever.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tom Inman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Inman

Headteacher