



21st August 2020

Dear parents and carers

I hope this finds you well and that you are enjoying the summer.

Firstly, many congratulations once again to all [GCSE](#) and [A level](#) students who have received results this week and last. They thoroughly deserve their success, especially after all they have been through since March. In my [message to Year 11 students](#) and parents the day before GCSE results day, I was unable to avoid drifting into political territory in saying that I have been absolutely appalled by the way the whole matter of A' level results has been handled by the government. Although we were lucky to escape the worst of it compared to some other centres, we still had a number of individuals who were awarded some perverse and unjust grades that left them desperately worried and upset on results day. Most of these problems were both entirely predictable and avoidable. Fortunately, most students are now in a better position, but it is still very far from ideal and I sincerely wish they had not been put through what they have been. As ever, we remain ready to support in any way we can.

I should also say that, whilst GCSE results were not the national fiasco that A' level results were, we still have a lot of sympathy for those students who have been left wondering if they could have achieved even higher grades had they sat the exams in person. Again, thankfully, the vast majority of students were very happy with the grades they received but we know that is of no consolation to the few who feel somewhat hard done by for whatever reason.

Overall, it has certainly been a very strange exam results season and not one I would like to repeat. However, the huge positive has been the way in which the young people concerned have handled it all; it is not an exaggeration to say that they have been truly inspiring, and a real reminder of why we do this job.

On an entirely different note, preparations for September are continuing apace. Nothing of substance has changed since my [letter at the end of term](#) and we are just finalising the finer details at the moment. Unless the government changes its guidance again or something else changes externally, you can assume this will be the basis on which we will be operating. Mr Thompson will be in touch early next week with some more of the operational details, including a student guide and some videos that we would like students to watch before the new term starts. Please look out for these.

It might be worth saying again at this stage that we need to be very realistic about what is achievable. We are taking a number of very significant measures to minimise the risks to staff and students, but nothing will be perfect and there are apparent contradictions in any possible model. For example, we all know that students from different year groups will have to be on buses together (as indeed siblings in different year groups live with one another) and there will be times during the school day when they will pass by one another: i.e. the year group 'bubbles' will not be perfectly maintained at all times. However, one of our key principles is that, just because we cannot do something all of the time, it does not mean we don't do it when we can: every small action will help. We'd appreciate your support in reinforcing some of the key messages around students taking responsibility for social distancing

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where possible, hand washing and respiratory hygiene etc. Above all, please make sure you do not send your child to school in the first place if they are showing any Covid symptoms, that you seek a test as soon as possible in such circumstances and keep the school informed at all times. Similarly, please make sure that you fully respect the government rules about quarantining if you have been on holiday in one of the affected countries and let us know if your child cannot start school on time as a result.

I shall leave you to enjoy the weekend now and, as I say, Mr Thompson will be writing next week with some more details. We are really looking forward to seeing everyone back in school in a couple of weeks, especially the new Year 7 cohort.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gwyn Williams', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gwyn Williams