

Dear Parent/ Carer,

I would like to start my letter by congratulating the vast majority of Year 11 students who managed to complete their mock exams successfully last term. We received extremely positive feedback from our chief examiner, who noted that this Year group have proven to be one of the best cohorts to sit and complete their exams in the conditions of formal examinations. We commend those that spent the last half-term putting in the hard work to ensure success with their mock results and hope that this is reflected in the grades that they receive.

This half-term will be another challenging one, and I would like to update you on some key dates and plans as we move through the year. It is important that we continue to work together in partnership to ensure that any barriers that our young people face over the next few months are addressed and overcome. As a school, we believe that both our pastoral and academic provision is exceptionally strong and there are a range of supportive tools that can be accessed by young people if needed along their journey at Lymm High School.

Wednesday 19th January is the Year 11 mock results day, where your child will receive their grades from the exams held in December. Please note that for those individuals who may have outstanding exams to complete due to personal circumstances, this will be reflected in the grade that is awarded. All outstanding papers will need to be completed as soon as possible, and staff are in the process of ensuring plans are in place for those affected by this.

Next week you will also receive the 2nd Progress report for Year 11, which will include the mock grades for your child alongside their current predicted grades and attitude to learning scores. You will then have a chance to catch up with your child's subject teachers on **Thursday 27th January** to discuss this further. Please note that to ensure all parents get the opportunity to see each teacher, we have changed the length of appointments to 4 minutes. If you feel that you have any concerns that you may wish to have a lengthier discussion about, it would be advised to contact the classroom teacher separately to arrange a convenient time to do this, as would be advised at any point of the academic year.

The government remains determined that GCSE exams will go ahead as planned this summer and that still seems to be by far the most likely scenario. It is really important that students keep working hard, taking advantage of any opportunities for revision to ensure they are in the best possible position to do well in the exams, which are scheduled to start in May. At the same time, you will be aware that the government have asked schools to prepare for a 'Plan B' scenario just in case exams do need to be cancelled. In such a situation, students will need the necessary evidence for teachers to be able to award them a GCSE grade. The national guidance is that each school must ensure that students have three separate assessment points across the year that, taken together, would be used to formulate their final grade.

So far, we have the December mocks which would be used as their first assessment point. We have now developed plans for the 2nd set of assessments, which will take place across a four-week period, starting soon after February half-term. This assessment period will be slightly different to the mock exams that have just taken place in that these assessments will largely take place in classrooms. We have also advised that assessments should be no longer than 45 minutes (not including any additional time that may be needed for individual students) and be spread across four weeks. All of this is to ensure that assessments are manageable for students and should not cause significant disruption to the preparation for the external summer exams. Students will be given guidance on

what to revise for assessments in due course, and this information will be shared with parents and carers too. All students with access arrangements will still have the correct provision that they are entitled to, and we will contact these parents separately with further information.

One of the reasons we are not sharing any more details just yet is that we are waiting for the information that we have been promised from exam boards about key topics that will be in exam papers (one of the ways the government is trying to ensure students are not disadvantaged by the impact of the COVID pandemic). This should be with schools by 7th February at the latest. Obviously, we will take account of this when planning assessments for next half-term so that revision for these will also be useful for the summer exams.

We do appreciate that this cohort of students are having to struggle with a degree of uncertainty on top of everything else and it's not easy. However, we are confident that the plans we now have in place mean Lymm High students will be in the strongest possible position whatever happens. Once again, the key message to students is that they should continue to work hard in class and at home, listen to their teachers and assume that exams will go ahead in the summer.

There continues to be a range of extra support strategies in place for our Year 11 students, ranging from revision sessions, to subject-specific intervention, after-school study groups, breakfast clubs, 1:1 mentoring, and much more. If you would like to know more about this, feel free to contact us for further information. Don't forget that we have a section on our website which outlines the recommended revision material for each of the subject areas that we offer at GCSE, which can be found [here](#). We also continue to encourage the use of Tassomai, Seneca learning and GCSE pod additional to the homework that is set by teachers in an attempt to re-visit and embed learning of key knowledge from your child's GCSE courses.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind parents/ carers about the importance of attendance over the coming months and the strong correlation between high attendance and progress made by students. We know that this year has been especially difficult for many, but being in school and making the most of these last few months will prove invaluable for our Year 11's futures. If you require any support linked to attendance, please email Mrs Wagstaff.

If you have any further questions regarding this letter, please get in touch.

Kind regards,

Miss Taylor