

Our Ref: WAL/jc

October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Year 13 Update**

It is great to see so many Year 13 students back in school, many of them now busily working on their University applications. Our internal deadline for these to be completed, to allow us to do all the rigorous checking we always do, to give students the best possible chance of achieving top places, will be Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November.

In the last 2 weeks before half-term students will be doing assessments in all their subjects which will inform an assessment grade that will go on the first SPC cycle after half-term. These grades may be different to their 'Going to grade' or predicted grade for university applications, but we wanted to give students the opportunity to demonstrate their potential, given the lost Year 12 exams and other assessment opportunities during lockdown. It could contribute to the range of information teachers could use if we were required to give teacher predictions again this year, but it is only one of many such pieces of evidence so students should not worry unduly. We hope to have mock exams at the end of January as usual which should give a more useful picture of students' likely attainment.

The Year 13 Parents Evening is scheduled for Tuesday November 17<sup>th</sup> and we plan to let students make their own appointments as usual. However, these discussions will take place over the phone during that evening so we will be asking students to provide us with the best number to contact you on. More information will follow on these arrangements but I wanted you to make a note of the date at this stage.

Finally, some tutors have remarked that whilst students seem pleased to be back in school and learning, many seem understandably anxious about the restrictions and implications of COVID. Please remember, as I remind the students, that we have a Young Minds counsellor in school who students can drop in to see on a Friday morning, or arrange an appointment with by getting referred from their Sixth Form Tutor. There are also other options if students are experiencing mental health issues: [www.speakupspace.co.uk](http://www.speakupspace.co.uk) was recommended before lockdown as something that can provide instant messaging and online support with a connected free phone line for parents – Live Minds on 08000051445. There are also lots of useful self-help videos designed by young people on the NHS Every Mind Matters page at [www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters](http://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters).

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any concerns or questions about these upcoming events and I hope you are finding a way to get through these challenging times.

Yours faithfully



S Wallinger  
Head of Sixth Form