



CARLETON HIGH SCHOOL

25 March 2020

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Dear Year 11 student and your parents/carers

If somebody had told me a week ago that I would be writing this letter to you, I wouldn't have believed them. It was just over a week ago, when we were all at the year 11 'Revision Festival'. There was a real 'buzz,' with year 11 eager to collect all their revision resources and parents keen to support them; and now the summer exams have been cancelled.

For all of us at Carleton, we probably have yet to fully grasp what has happened, there is a real mixture of emotions but, simply put, we are all gutted. Nonetheless, please be assured that my objective is to ensure all of our incredible year 11 students receive the grades they deserve.

There is, however, one thing I do know, our year 11 students will go on to lead hugely successful lives because of the people they have become over their five year learning journey at Carleton High School. I am so privileged to have worked with such a special bunch of young people, and I can honestly say this cohort of year 11s certainly are an amazing group of individuals. I am incredibly proud of them. I am proud of all their hard work and 'whatever it takes' attitude, especially this year. I am proud of how they conducted themselves last week. They have shown a maturity beyond their years in the face of uncertainty, the likes of which we have never experienced ourselves as adults before.

Currently, I am afraid I cannot give you all the answers to some of the many questions you may have, but I wanted to provide you with the most up to date information at present.

GCSE Grades/2020 Exams

As we are all aware, all summer formal qualifications have been cancelled and students will not sit GCSE exams. Our understanding at present is that grades will be awarded by means of teacher assessment. Currently, it has not been confirmed what this will look like, we do know that it will be more complex than teachers inputting a grade and students being awarded that grade. There will certainly be elements of the calculations which are out of our control, taking into account the national picture. We have however, been assured by the Prime Minister and the exam boards that students will not be disadvantaged. In addition, if students do not feel their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam at the earliest reasonable opportunity, once schools are open again. Students will also have the option to sit their exams in summer 2021.

With regards to vocational qualifications and coursework, these subjects are continuing at present, and it is important for students to continue completing any outstanding coursework.

Please refer to the guidance provided in the press release from the Department for Education (DfE) published by the Education Secretary on 20 March 2020 for further information.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-details-on-exams-and-grades-announced>



**CARLETON
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This week all year 11 students have been set work to complete in preparation for GCSE exams. As you will appreciate the planning for this started some time ago, when it became apparent a school closure was likely. We were in a position where content was already covered and the work was focused on revision. Our recommendation is that students should continue to access the resources and complete work on areas they feel they need development on. We have made the point to them that this learning should be lifelong learning and not merely for formal exams. Also, following the guidance from the DfE, there is a possibility of exams in the future should students wish to sit them, and we would view this as potential preparation. Crucially, work will still be set for vocational subjects as it is likely we will still need to submit coursework in order to ensure the most accurate grades possible and it's crucial this is completed.

Whether it be through Show My Home Work (SMHW) or Google Classrooms, teachers will respond to queries the students may have and do their best to support while school is closed. Students may want to request extra work in subjects they intend on studying next year.

In addition to the above, we know that colleges and further education centers are being flexible in their approach to applications, and we will be in discussions with our main partners to look at the possibility of bridging work, or a project that would allow a smooth transition to Key Stage 5. I would encourage students to invest time in researching the courses they have applied for and to complete some additional reading to put themselves in the strongest position possible in the not too distant future.

Leavers Celebrations

I hope the last five years have been an enjoyable experience for all our students at Carleton High School. It truly saddens me that our time has been cut short and, following guidance, it is with regret that we have also had to cancel the prom. There was however, a special atmosphere in school on Friday afternoon, and it was fabulous to see our young people, who have been dealt one of the biggest blows of all, with smiles on their faces as they left the school through our Carleton High School guard of honour!

To all our students, this is certainly not 'goodbye'. We as staff are not ready to do that yet and most importantly, you as young people, are not ready for that either. We will do everything in our power to make it special when we say our goodbyes in the future, and will schedule celebrations in due course to give you the best leaving experience possible, and the send off you deserve.

It has honestly been a pleasure to be part of your educational journey. This is not goodbye, but for now; stay safe, be happy and do everything you can to look after each other in the coming days and weeks. As always, thank you to parents and carers for your continued support, it genuinely is appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Jo Cross
Head of School