

22 January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the academy trust, to express my sincerest thanks to all parents and carers for the support you have shown our Principals, leaders, teachers and support staff during this challenging time. Your messages and comments have been gratefully received as colleagues have done their utmost to make the transition to online learning as smooth as possible for students and their families in this ever-changing pandemic.

It is absolutely critical that all students engage with their online learning and I urge you to contact your child's school if you have any concerns or queries. It is important that we work together to ensure that your child receives the very best education we can deliver. Schools can be contacted via the 'Contact Us' button on the school website.

Year 11 and Year 13 students will understandably be concerned about how their grades will be calculated in the summer. While we await guidance on the process to be followed this year, the Department for Education and Ofqual, the exams regulator, are currently consulting stakeholders on the evidence schools will use to calculate Centre Assessed Grades (CAG) for GCSEs, AS and A Levels. The consultation can be accessed [here](#). In addition, they are also consulting on alternative arrangements for the award of vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs). This is a separate consultation and can be accessed [here](#). Ofqual is seeking feedback from students and parents/carers so I would encourage you to engage in the consultations. Please note, both consultations will close at 11:45pm on 29 January 2021.

Grades will not be calculated until the summer term and therefore schools will need to ensure that they have the very best evidence available to them when these decisions are made. We fully expect that this will include work students have completed during the lockdown period and it is therefore important that your child continues to engage with and completes their online learning.

Praising Stars reports will be issued as normal this half term for students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13, and these will include predicted grades. I must emphasise that these grades are not centre assessed grades, they are predictions: the grades that your child is on track to achieve provided they continue to work as they currently are. Grades may go up and down dependent on the quality of work your child produces and their engagement with online learning.

Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 will receive a Praising Stars report which contains an effort only grade for their subjects; this grade will reflect their effort and engagement with online learning.

Our priority will always be to keep our community as safe as possible whilst maintaining high standards of education. Thank you for the part you are playing in ensuring that your child continues to engage in their learning. Stay safe and look after each other.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julie Slater'.

Julie Slater  
**Chief Executive Principal, Secondary**