

NSH/CCH

18 January 2021

Dear Year 11 Parents/Carers and Students

### **2021 SUMMER EXAMS**

We do hope this letter finds you all well and safe.

We know that the uncertainty with regard to the Summer Exams in 2021 is causing a great deal of anxiety and concern amongst Year 11 students, parents/carers and the staff. As a school, we will support you in any way we can, keeping you updated with the latest guidance and advice.

You will have heard in the Prime Minister's statement last week that the summer 2021 exams will not be going ahead as planned. The Department for Education statement to schools says,

*"...in these circumstances, we do not think it is possible or fair for all exams this summer to go ahead as planned. The Secretary of State for Education will therefore work with OFQUAL to put in place alternative arrangements after consultation with the sector."*

Gavin Williamson has since confirmed that this is the case and that teachers' estimated grades may well be used in place of exams. Schools have not been given any further details from either the DfE or OFQUAL regarding this yet, and with a consultation beginning this week, it is likely to be some time until we know final details as to how grades will be awarded. We would have hoped that these consultations would have already happened and that a national contingency plan would have been in place to deal with this situation, but sadly that is not the case.

The DfE further announced (13.01.2021) that scheduled assessments for Vocational and Technical Qualifications (VTQs), will not take place in February or March this year. This detail has been posted on our school website and a text was sent to students concerned.

This includes the following exams, which were due to take place at Jesmond Park Academy and are now cancelled:

- 1st February - Promotion & Finance for Enterprise (Enterprise Tech Award)
- 3rd February - Influences on Global Travel & Tourism (Travel & Tourism Tech Award)
- 4th February - Effective Digital Working Practices (DIT Tech Award)
- 5th February - Health and Wellbeing (Health & Social Care Tech Award)

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Please see link below for further details.

<https://www.pearson.com/uk/about-us/news-and-policy/news/2021/01/educator-update-on-vtq-assessments.html>

We have no further advice other than what is included in the link above. We will keep you updated as we receive further information.

This puts us in all in a very difficult position so we understand how frustrated, worried and anxious you will be at hearing the news regarding all examinations. We have no doubt that you will be wondering what happens next.

**The key message to students in Year 11 is that you must continue to access online lessons and engage with school. The work and assessments you undertake this term will undoubtedly add to the evidence base your teachers already have in determining how well you are doing.**

### **Year 11 Mock Exams**

We are planning for the mock examinations timetabled for this week to go ahead when the school reopens for Year 11. The results of these assessments will add to the body of assessment information we have on students but will not be used on their own to determine final grades. Students should therefore continue to prepare for these assessments, and to take them seriously, but should not stress unduly about them!

### **Year 11 Report**

We plan that Year 11 parents/carers will still receive a full report from the school; we will keep you updated regarding dates.

### **Post 16**

We will continue to fully support you regarding your plans for further study at the end of Year 11. For many of you that will mean staying on with us at Jesmond Park Academy Sixth Form. For some of you that might mean securing an Apprenticeship or going to a Further Education College. With that in mind, we are going to continue with our Year 11 Careers interviews for all of our Year 11 students. These will be by telephone and will either be a member of staff from Connexions or EDT (who are the other careers company that we work with). These should be taking place in the lead up to and after February half term.

Most importantly however, we are going to ask all of our Year 11 students to complete an online destination/pre-enrolment to Jesmond Park Academy Sixth Form questionnaire. The purpose of this is for you to indicate whether or not you intend to remain at Jesmond Park Academy Sixth Form and if you do, which subjects would you provisionally be interested in studying. We understand how difficult this will be for you at this stage, but it will help us plan to ensure that as many students as possible are able to study the combination of subjects they wish to in Year 12. These choices would be provisional for you at this stage.

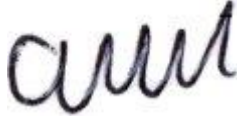
For those of you who are not intending to remain at Jesmond Park Academy we will use this to identify those students who will need support with making applications elsewhere. A member of our Sixth Form Team and our Careers Manager will also be in touch with you via telephone (or face to face whenever the school re-opens) as part of this process.

You will be emailed the link to the questionnaire over the next week or so. We will also message all of our Year 11 parents/carers, put a reminder on our website, and publicise it in the Year 11 assembly. It is also very important that you tick yes to the *'I do/do not consent to my details being shared with my chosen destination following school to support my transition'* to enable us to share your information with another institution if you are not planning on staying at Jesmond Park Academy Sixth Form.

I am sorry that it has taken until now to get this information to you but we wanted to wait as long as we could, so that we could provide you with as much information as possible. We hope that this provides you with greater clarity as to how things are likely to evolve, although I am sure that we would all have preferred a return to some kind of normality.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Smith', written in a cursive style.

Mrs C Smith  
Acting Principal

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Holmes', written in a cursive style.

Nigel Holmes  
Director of Student Progress