

STH/ARC/CCH

21 January 2021

Dear Year 13 Parents/Carers and Students

2021 SUMMER EXAMS

We know that the uncertainty with regard to the Summer Exams in 2021 is causing a great deal of anxiety and concern amongst Year 13 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 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, 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 text sent to students concerned.

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 13 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.**

Paul Anderson/Claire Smith Acting Principal

Hugh Robinson CEO

Jesmond Park West, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE7 7DP

T +44 (0)191 281 8486 F +44 (0)191 281 0381

E admin@jesmondparkacademy.org.uk W www.jesmondparkacademy.org.uk


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Registered Office: Gosforth Academy, Knightsbridge, Great North Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 2JH

Year 13 Mock Exams

We are planning for the mock examinations timetabled to go ahead when the school reopens for Year 13. 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 to the best of their ability.

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



Mrs C Smith
Acting Principal



Andy Costello
Director of Sixth Form