

5th January 2021

Dear Y11 Students,

I can only imagine the multitude of emotions running through your heads right now: anguish, sadness, frustration, excitement, relief...perhaps it is a bit of all of them!? I wanted to write a note to you to let you know that us teachers all sympathise and will be on hand to help you through this year so that you come out at the end with the grade you deserve. You have worked incredibly hard so far and we couldn't be more proud of you.

My key message to you is not to give up, in fact, you need to maintain the good work you have put in so far and continue that strong work ethic you have shown. We are still not sure how you will be awarded your grades, whether it is through centre-assessed grades like last year or based on internal assessments but do know that this will be done fairly and will recognise the work you have done thus far and the work you do from now until the end of the year.

Knowledge is power and the best gift we can give you is the abundance of knowledge you need to be successful for the next step in your academic careers; be it A Levels, a college course or apprenticeship. Therefore you need to continue to attend all online Teams lessons, complete all the work set by your teachers, read widely to ensure you maintain, or in fact develop, a stronger level of vocabulary, and continue to enjoy learning new knowledge that will lead you on to great things.

I am keenly aware that being at home like this and carrying out remote lessons is not without its challenges and so if you have any problems accessing work via SMH or MS Teams please let your tutor know and contact your teachers directly so they are aware it is something that is being looked into. I am also very aware that it isn't just studying at home that some of you might be finding stressful or difficult, just being confined at home can mean you might be feeling stressed, anxious, upset, worried about friends/family or down at different points during the days and weeks. There are steps you can take that I will outline, your wellbeing is just as important as your studies right now and it isn't time wasted to work on and improve your wellbeing.

Apps like Headspace and relaxation and mindfulness videos on YouTube are only a click away! It can be nice to give your day some structure and set aside 15 or 30 minutes a day to do a relaxation/mindfulness/breathing exercise to help promote and maintain your wellbeing. BohoBeautiful on YouTube offers yoga, Pilates and meditation videos that could be just what you need to keep you focused on your health. Ensure you are taking a walk (or a run or cycle) outdoors at least once a day for some well needed fresh air or for something more physical Joe Wicks will be returning next week with his 30 minute workouts. Perhaps get the whole household involved!

I will be in regular contact with you but use the Year 11 team, your teachers and our pastoral teams at any time should you want to discuss anything. We will also be in touch with you regarding the Sixth Form interviews, which will still go ahead either via a phone call or on Teams. This will be a nice opportunity for you to discuss your choices and ask any questions and this will take place over this half term.

Best wishes,

Mrs Durrett