



The Priory School

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Forward from the CEO of the 318 Trust

The Senior Leadership Team at school has looked carefully at the guidance and advice on teachers-assessed grades produced for schools, in addition to discussing the process with other Headteachers in the 3-18 Trust. Each school in the Trust has produced its own policy, which has been signed off by the Headteacher with oversight from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who is a former Headteacher of two secondary schools. The detail of the evidence used to inform the judgments on grades is decided by the school, Heads of Departments and teachers; in so doing, each school in the Trust follows the same time line and there has been discussion across the schools and between middle and senior leaders to assure a robust and fair process.

Dear Parents and Carers,

With the final few weeks of Year 11's formal time with us and the fast approaching two week assessment window I wanted to write to you, to update you on the processes we have already undertaken and give you a summary of some important points which you will want to have some clarity over.

Subject teachers and Heads of Department have worked incredibly hard, under the guidance of Mrs Knight, to establish a very clear departmental portfolio of evidence which will be used to support their Teacher Assessed Grades. We have given them time to meet, on a weekly basis, to ensure they are clearly focused on the standards each student is producing and all staff have undertaken training specific to this process.

Although all assessments will be finished by 21st May, it is incredibly important that your child attends every day, in the final week of term. From Monday 24th May to Wednesday 26th May they must attend all lessons as they will be engaged in dialogue and compilation of their final assessment portfolio. This is a step which the exams boards are insisting upon and one which we are deliberately placing great emphasis on. Students will sign a declaration form and be aware of the pieces of work being submitted. We cannot, due to JCQ/exam board guidance, tell our students their overall, final grade. They will receive this on 12th August. However, having an opportunity to review the pieces of work submitted will mean there will be no surprises on results day.

Their final grade will be based on the evidence within this portfolio, therefore the standard at which they are currently performing. We are not allowed to base it on potential. Therefore, please emphasise the importance of the next few weeks as students still have an opportunity to not only consolidate but improve their performance up until 21st May.

We have put in place various layers of moderation and standardisation of student grades. This is not just at departmental level but also across neighbouring schools and with colleagues in our Trust. We will then be moderating at whole school level, involving the senior leadership team and myself to ensure that students' results are reflective of their current performance. This will be given the time it needs across the coming weeks but also on our PD Day on 28th May. A final layer of moderation of our work will come from the exam boards. They will sample student work from a number of departments after we submit our grades on 18th June. This will ensure national parity which I believe is incredibly important for this cohort.

Please do not approach any of your child's teachers about their final grade. If we are seen to be involved in any discussions of this nature, with parents and carers, it will jeopardise the integrity of the whole portfolio and could result in the exam board taking action to disallow any grades being awarded. I would like to reassure you that staff have put in place a fair and rigorous process which closely mirrors JCQ's expectations.

Appeals

There will be an appeals window which will be open from Results Day 12th August until 27th August. Initial appeals will be administered by the school's senior leadership team and exam officer but will be solely focused on whether there has been an administrative error. If this is found to not be the case then the original grade will stand. If a student is still dissatisfied with their grade they can ask the school to submit an appeal to the exam board on their behalf. If they decide to do this, as in any year, students do need to know that their grade could go down as well as up. We will supply all necessary paperwork on results day. However, I would like to emphasise that knowledge of their assessment portfolio should mean that their final grade, in August should not be a surprise to students and we are hoping that there will be very few, if any appeals needed.

This cohort have come back to school after the recent lockdown with high levels of attendance in comparison with local schools and with a determination to do well. They should feel suitably proud of all they have managed to achieve within such an unusual academic year. We do not want them to leave us without some sort of celebration to mark their departure. This is somewhat hindered (quite rightly) by Covid restrictions. However, we are organising a final day 'breakfast' on 27th May where Year 11 can come into school, say goodbye to tutors and Heads of House, sign shirts and spend some time together as a cohort. We will then also arrange a celebration event; a combination of year awards and informal Prom, later in June. More specific details will follow shortly.

As always, thank you for your support in what has been a challenging year for your child.

Kind regards



Mrs A Pope
Headteacher