



Perschore High School

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challenging,
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Tuesday 12th January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

Summer Exams Cancellation, Pre-Public Examination (PPE) results issue & Year 11 Parents' Evening (Wednesday 13th January 2021)

In light of tomorrow's Parents' Evening and enclosing your son/daughter's PPE results, it is an appropriate time to write to you following the Government's announcement last week that GCSE and vocational, examinations are cancelled this summer. We try not to react immediately to sudden announcements to policies by the DfE, preferring to respond appropriately when more information is available. This announcement is of huge significance to our students, parents/carers and school staff. We had assumed, and hoped, that a plan for awarding grades would have been published at the same time as the announcement to give everyone clarity. Unfortunately, we are not in a position, a week after the announcement, to give you any more information as to how final student grades will be determined.

Simon Lebus, Ofqual's Interim Chief Regulator, responded to the Prime Minister's announcement by saying: *'We know that this is a difficult time for students, their parents and carers, teachers and trainers. Our message to students is this: please continue to engage as fully as you can in your education. That will be online for the majority of students, or face-to-face for those students still going in to their school, college or training provider. This will put you in the best position, whatever arrangements are made for your qualifications. It's important that teachers and students can focus on the knowledge and skills needed to equip students to progress to the next stage, whatever form that might take – whether to college, an apprenticeship, university or employment.'* The DfE and Ofqual are currently working on their proposals and we understand Ofqual are launching a two-week consultation about these this week. As soon as any information is published regarding this consultation, I will let you know how to participate should this be possible; I will also update you with any decisions that are made as soon as they become clear.

Last year when the exams were cancelled all students received the grades they needed to progress to the next stage of their lives. We are confident that whatever process Ofqual puts in place, we will ensure that decisions regarding student grades will be robust, fair and objective. It is not helpful for the students to see so many possibilities for the awarding of grades discussed in the media and on social media and I would suggest that these are ignored for now. Last year, students and parents/carers were not permitted to contact staff about the awarding of grades, in fact doing so was considered to be malpractice; at this stage we have no more information than you do regarding the awarding of grades.

Attached with this letter are your son/daughter's PPE results. The majority of students completed the exams to the best of their ability and staff are aware of those students for whom this was not the case due to personal circumstances or who were self-isolating prior to or during the PPEs. For many the PPEs are a very useful guide when considering final grades but will not be the sole evidence in any process decided by Ofqual for any student. In many subjects the grade is made up from specific aspects of the syllabus, not the whole course, and therefore cannot be the only way grades are determined. The message for the students is the same as that currently from Ofqual; there are still a number of very valuable months of learning and assessment to come and all students should give their best during this period.



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Given the uncertainty over grading of students this summer, we had considered postponing the Parents' Evening to a later date when, hopefully, we would have more information to share. However, we decided that this was not fair and that the students deserved feedback on their PPE performance as early as possible this term. **For the reasons stated above, it will not be appropriate to discuss grade predictions during the Parents' Evening appointments**; they will focus on how students can improve in the coming months until the end of the school year. I know my colleagues are looking forward to seeing the students and parents/carers during the online appointments tomorrow.

I would like to congratulate the students on their PPE outcomes and thank you once again for your support with home learning and in guiding your son/daughter through their current situation.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PH', enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Phil Hanson
Headteacher