



SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

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8th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Exams

I am sure you are all aware of the announcement in the Commons at lunchtime on Wednesday. It has been confirmed that GCSE and A-Level exams will not go ahead this year and that the Government are "going to put our trust in teachers rather than algorithms". Whilst having no national exams is not ideal, I am pleased that the Government will allow schools to grade their students. The teachers at STFS know your child well and there is plenty of time to improve grades before we have to submit them.

My instinct is that it puts us in a very strong position with our cohorts. Students clearly still have plenty to work for and prove; we hope this message will ensure that they continue to work hard through the remaining elements of their courses. As a school, we will need to ensure that we have a firm evidence base for our decisions, but we also have time to ensure that students have a number of opportunities to prove their abilities in an appropriate way and with integrity. This is why it is so important that students continue to put their full effort in to their studies. The Government did state that there will be clear guidance and training for schools to ensure that grades are consistent and fair.

To the students, I urge you to continue with your current programmes of study and continue to push yourself towards the very best grades you can achieve. You still have plenty of time to improve grades and evidence your learning.

Please don't let exams define you- I know that there will be equal disappointment and joy about not having exams, but do not let the announcement in any way detract from the work you have ahead of you. Our message to you is that you need to continue to work hard, you need to continue to focus on your subjects, you need to identify your gaps in learning via your mock feedback, and you need to look at your mocks and use them as a base to strive even further.

Our Senior Leadership Team will meet early next week to ensure a consistent approach for each subject. It may well be that we decide to run a modified and shortened exam season so that students have the opportunity to sit an exam and feel that sense of closure over their studies. There are a number of decisions to be made, and we will communicate these once we have the full details.



As I said, I will be in touch once schools have further details regarding the specifics of the process.

Best wishes,

Neale Pledger
Headteacher

