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Principal: Mr I Patel

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Dear Year 11 Students and Parents/Carers

The Prime Minister announced yesterday evening that GCSE exams will not take place this summer in the normal way. You may have seen some headlines in the media, suggesting that exams are cancelled, however, this is mis-leading as the following was said by Boris Johnson:

'We recognise that this will mean it is not possible or fair for all exams to go ahead this summer as normal. The Education Secretary will work with Ofqual to put in place alternative arrangements.'

This suggests that there may be alternative forms of assessments but as yet schools have not been provided with any details. We hope that in the coming days we will get further information as to what will replace them, but it seems reasonable to expect students may receive grades for some subjects if not all, based on a similar system to 2020. This will involve teachers **assessing performance using classwork (face to face and remote), homework, coursework, mock exams grades, assessment grades, attitude to learning and the degree of engagement with online lessons.**

I am aware of the shock and disappointment this news will bring. The government had consistently told students, parents and teachers that *exams would happen* this year, and we all planned on that basis. However, once the initial shock has worn off, I would urge you all to consider these three points, as they should provide some reassurance:

1. Your hard work will still be recognised.

None of the effort you have shown so far, and will continue to show in the coming months, will be wasted. On the contrary, the new system will make sure this is fully reflected in your final grade. So you must carry on to do the set work as best as you can and engage with all online learning on MS Teams and ClassCharts every day on time. Mock exams will go ahead after February half term, so work hard for them, revise and show your teachers what you are capable of.

2. Your eventual results will be indistinguishable from real exams.

In the long run, it won't matter your grades came via this system. You will still be able to progress to Sixth Form and University in the normal way. The value of your GCSE qualifications is not being altered, only the way they are administered. None of your ambitions for the future will be affected by this decision.

3. **The new system will be fair and balanced.**

Grades will be awarded based on objective evidence. Any grades that your teachers set will be moderated carefully, to ensure they are consistent within and between schools. If any parent or student were to be disappointed with their eventual grade, we expect there to be a mechanism to appeal and take a follow-up exam in the autumn, just as there was last time.

I know it is asking a lot of you all, on top of everything you have been through already, but you must **take these points on board** and **keep going**. Today, you may be shocked and disappointed – anyone would be in your position. But in the coming days you will process the news, and in the long run you will be absolutely fine. Your teachers were aware of this possibility and will guide and support you through the remainder of this year, just the way they did the year 11s last year. **For now, just turn up to all your online lessons, keep working hard, and know that every piece of work you complete will still make a difference to your final grade and add to the evidence base.**

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'I Patel', written in a cursive style.

Mr I Patel
Principal