

11 January 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

### Headteacher Update: Year 11

I hope you are all safe and well at this time.

Following my letter on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January, in which I explained that the government had confirmed that, GCSEs and A-levels will be cancelled in 2021, I am writing to you to update you on the actions we have taken as a school and the measures we are putting in place to provide support to our students and families. From our experiences of last year when examinations were also cancelled, we know that many of our students will be feeling unsettled and uncertain about what this will mean for them, and that parents and carers will also be experiencing similar emotions. As always, we will do everything we can to offer support and reassurance and share updated information with you openly, so that you are as fully informed as possible at every stage.

On Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January, the Secretary of State for Education explained that the government would be in consultation with Ofqual, to rapidly agree an approach for “alternative arrangements” that will allow students to progress fairly. Whilst we do not yet have any significant detail, we do now know that these alternative arrangements will take the form of ‘teacher assessments’. The speculation about what the proposed ‘teacher assessments’ might look like has, inevitably, already started in the national press and on social media. However, there have been no further official details shared or confirmed with schools by the government at this stage. We hope to know exactly what the ‘teacher assessments’ will entail soon and I assure you that I will communicate this information to you as soon I am able to; I really do appreciate what a test of patience this is and it goes without saying that we are keeping a very close eye on all developments. For now, all we know for certain is that a consultation with Ofqual will take place before we are given exact guidance about what the assessments will look like and how, exactly, these will operate.

Our Year 11 students have worked exceptionally hard and we want to ensure that in coming months they continue to make progress and work towards formal internal assessments. We also want to ensure that, regardless of what is required from the ‘teacher assessments’, our Year 11 students are in the very best possible position to succeed and we are confident they will be. In the meantime, remote learning will involve students continuing with their courses, building their knowledge and skills even further, consolidating learning and understanding, and seeking support from their teachers and tutors in the usual way.

Last Friday, Mrs Lissaman, Head of Year 11, delivered an assembly to all students in Year 11 explaining the government’s rationale for cancelling GCSEs this year and outlining the expectations and support available to them at this time. Ahead of the assembly, students were also given the opportunity to ask questions so that these could be answered as part of the assembly, offering them reassurance and also sharing the most up to date information we have available with our students. A copy of the assembly was made available to all Year 11 students.



Equally, we recognise that parents and carers will also have many questions and, therefore, last week we took the decision to offer a series of bookable webinars to parents and carers of Year 11 students on **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021** in order to share updates and to answer any general questions you might have regarding the support we are offering our students at NSG. I will be delivering these webinars personally and, while I may not be able to give you any further specific details beyond those that I am sharing with you today, I do want to provide you with an opportunity to ask questions directly, should you wish to. Further details about these webinars have been shared with you via Edulink. Please do check your email. If you have any questions that relate specifically to your daughter, please contact her tutor in the first instance or Miss Lissaman, [rlissaman@nsg.northants.sch.uk](mailto:rlissaman@nsg.northants.sch.uk), who will be able to give you more personalised support and advice.

With best wishes,



**Cristina Taboada-Naya | Headteacher  
Northampton School for Girls**

