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Chief Executive: Mr D Judson, BEd, NPQH
Head of School: Mr N Lindsay, BA (Hons), NPQH

20th March 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

Re: Department for Education Update - GCSE Exam Series Summer 2020 (0144-19NLI)

I am writing to update you with information the school has received from the Department for Education regarding the process for awarding pupils their GCSE qualifications for the GCSE exam series in summer 2020.

I would firstly like to take this opportunity to thank Year 11 pupils for all of their hard work this year. Their response in lessons, interventions and to the various revision strategies we have put in place has been overwhelming. We want to reassure pupils that this hard work will not go to waste. The resilience, independence and confidence pupils have developed during this time will help tremendously as they move forward into 'life after Longfield'. I would also like to extend my thanks to parents / carers for all the hard work that you have put in, supporting Year 11 pupils throughout this academic year.

As you may be aware, following the Government's actions to slow the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus), the **summer GCSE exams have been cancelled**. The exam regulator, Ofqual, together with the examination boards, will work with teachers to provide grades to pupils whose exams have been cancelled.

The Government's priority is to ensure affected pupils can move on, as planned, to the next stage of their education or training this autumn. This means ensuring GCSE pupils are awarded with a grade that fairly reflects the work that they have put in. With this in mind, Ofqual will develop and set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each pupil, which reflects their performance as fairly as possible. In order to ensure this is consistently applied for all pupils, Ofqual will work alongside exam boards and teachers. Exam boards will ask teachers, who know their pupils well, to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe a pupil would have achieved if exams had gone ahead.

To produce this grade, teachers will take into account a range of evidence and data including performance on mock exams and non-exam assessments. Clear guidance on how to do this fairly and robustly will be provided to schools and colleges. The exam boards will then combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, and use this information to produce a calculated grade for each pupil, which will be a best assessment of the work they have put in.

We want to reassure you that even though learning for the majority cannot continue in the classroom or in person, we are continuing to work hard to ensure you have the resources you need to access via Teams, and to support your child's learning at home. We are continuing to develop additional support and resources and will make them available to you as soon as they are ready.



We are grateful for your patience! Please rest assured that we will continue to post regular updates via ParentMail and the school website.

The Government's aim is to provide these calculated grades to pupils before the end of July 2020. In terms of a permanent record, the grades will be indistinguishable from those provided in other years.

Nevertheless, the Government recognises that some pupils may feel disappointed that they have not been able to sit their exams. If pupils do not believe the correct process has been followed in their case, pupils will be able to appeal on that basis. In addition, if pupils do not feel their calculated grade reflects their performance, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam at the earliest reasonable opportunity, once schools reopen. Pupils will also have the option to sit their exams in summer 2021.

Finally, what would normally be a day of celebration and a 'rite of passage' for Year 11 pupils to celebrate the end of their formal education and time at Longfield has had to be put on hold. At this stage we have no idea how long school may be closed for, but I have reassured all of Year 11 that we will not forget about them! Whilst I cannot say what a potential celebration might be or when it will be held at this moment, we will be organising an event of some kind to celebrate our 'Class of 2020'.

Once again thank you for your support during this incredibly difficult time.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicholas Lindsay', with a long, sweeping underline.

Nicholas Lindsay
Head of School