

24<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you are well and that the return to lessons in school has gone smoothly for your child. It is lovely to see our classrooms full once again. I am writing to provide some more information about Evidence Informed Grades (EIGs) that will be awarded to our Year 11, Level 2 Year 12 and Year 13 students this summer.

**Important dates:**

- We have to submit Evidence Informed Grades to the exam boards by 18 June.
- A Level and Vocational Level 3 results will be published on 10 August.
- GCSE and Vocational Level 1 and 2 results will be published on 12 August.

**What evidence will be used to assign student grades?**

- Assessment will be based on the standard at which students are working.
- Students will only be assessed on content they have been taught.
- The grades will be based on actual work which has been marked, rather than an algorithm.
- A range of assessment evidence will be used, in line with guidance from exam boards, but we will need to be confident that it is the student's own work.
- Each department will determine its own portfolio of evidence, in line with Academy guidance, which provides the best overview of student attainment in the circumstances.
- The evidence can come from any point during the course of study, but recent work, and assessments still to be completed, are likely to be more heavily weighted.
- In deciding on the appropriate weighting, we are also likely to take into account whether the work was produced in secure conditions, whether the marking was moderated by teachers, and the preparation undertaken by the students.
- The evidence which will count towards the final result will be the numerical score from each assessment, rather than any grades communicated during the course of study. Final grades will only be determined at the very end of the process and could be higher or lower than grades included in previous academic reports or for particular assessments.
- Students will be informed in advance of the assessment evidence which we intend to use, but will not be informed of the grade until the results days in August, in line with Ofqual's instructions.

*A qualification level grade for vocational students will be determined based on completed unit level assessments from across the course and/or a range of other evidence which demonstrates their performance in the qualification.*

**Assessments still in the future:**

- We plan to give students further opportunities to demonstrate what they are capable of in each subject during the Summer term.
- The bulk of these opportunities will consist of short in class assessments, some of which may be provided by exam boards, which we have yet to receive. These assessments will typically be shorter than normal public exams.
- Students will be given advance notice of the timings of their assessments and what they should revise.
- Students will always know if and when the work they are doing will count formally towards their grade. They will not be assessed without their knowledge.
- We will make provision so that students eligible for exams access arrangements will be able to use them.



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Academy**

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- Leaving dates for students in Years 11 and 13 are yet to be confirmed, but are likely to be close to May/June half term, once the assessments are complete.

*Students in vocational courses will continue to complete internal assessments, such as coursework, to add to the evidence available for their grade.*

#### **How we will ensure that grades are fair?:**

- We will carry out quality assurance (including moderation) and check grades thoroughly before they are submitted.
- We will consider previous results from Southfields Academy to ensure that this year's grades are not unduly harsh or lenient.
- Exam boards will review our quality assurance processes before grades are submitted.
- Once grades are submitted, the exam board will conduct various checks to make sure grades submitted are fair and consistent across centres. This will include sampling of evidence.
- If there are concerns with the grades submitted, the exam board will work with the school to address this before results day. Exam boards will not re-assess the work on which the grades are based.

#### **After results days:**

- Students will be entitled to appeal against their results.
- Any appeal will be considered initially by the school to determine whether processes were followed correctly, without errors.
- If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal, the school will appeal to the exam board on the student's behalf, and the exam board will consider whether the processes were appropriate and whether academic judgement was exercised reasonably by the school in arriving at the grade.
- **It is important to note that appeals could lead to grades going down as well as up.**
- The Department for Education has indicated that it hopes to offer an autumn series of exams for students who wish to try to improve on their teacher-assessed grades. This has yet to be confirmed.

#### **Next steps:**

We are working to plan the portfolio of evidence which will be used in each qualification. This cannot be finalised until we have heard from exam boards with more precise guidance and a package of assessment materials. We will provide you with information about the assessment portfolios as soon as possible. I am sure you will understand that it will not be possible for us to enter into conversation with you about the grades to be awarded, and I would ask you to refrain from contacting any teachers to ask about them, because the restrictions placed on them mean that they will not be able to answer.

#### **Live Stream Information Session - Wednesday 31st March 2021**

Between 5.00 - 6.00pm we are offering a live event that will explain the process of awarding Evidence Informed Grades (EIGs) for Year 11, Level 2 Year 12 and Year 13 students. We will provide details about how your child will be supported during this time and how they can maximise their success.

There will also be an opportunity for a question and answer session which will hopefully provide reassurances and alleviate any anxieties surrounding this process.

We will send information about how to access this Zoom event next week.

We understand how difficult this situation is for our students, and it is not the way we wanted their courses to end. However, please be assured that we are taking the

responsibility of assessing grades with the utmost seriousness and aiming to give them every chance to demonstrate what they can do, in order to gain the outcomes they deserve. The most important message is that our students should continue to work hard, as there are opportunities for them to earn success. We have every confidence in them, and we look forward to congratulating them on results day.

In the meantime, thank you for your ongoing support, and we wish your child the very best of luck in all assessments they undertake.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'TG' with a flourish at the end.

Tracy Gray  
Deputy Headteacher - Standards.