

Year 11 Update: Monday 27 April 2020

Dear Year 11 Students, Parents and Carers

Thank you to and your family with your patience in what continues to be extraordinary times. I want to take the opportunity to share our school's explanation on how we are adjusting our expectations of Y11 work from this week, our rationale for previous structures and share some insight into what we expect to happen going forward.

As you are aware from our most recent parental newsletter, from Monday 27 April we have launched our Post 16 curriculum offer for our Year 11 students. Students will no longer be expected to log on to complete individual lessons, but rather complete transitional work and subject specific work for any subjects or courses they will be studying in September, in addition to any exams they wish to take.

I am aware for many families this continues to be a stressful time, and I hope this letter answers any questions you may have. I have also attached in the link below my own personal recorded message to students, parents and carers which presents the same information as this letter.

VIDEO MESSAGE HERE:

https://www.loom.com/share/68b68a50945f44ffa9de18c3c64a6ba7?utm_medium=gif

BSW: Understanding our context and the challenges of a newly opened school

It is really important in these unprecedented times to appreciate this is an exceptional situation for every Year 11 student, family member, and teacher at the school to be in. Under the government guidance, it has stated that consideration of a schools' previous academic results could be considered as one of the measures used when allocating our recommendation for GCSE grades. As a newly opened school this provides an additional set of unique circumstances which could prove challenging to us and our students as we only have one year of GCSE results achieved under very different circumstances.

Our current Year 11 year group are a larger cohort than previous who have benefited from 5 years at Bohunt Worthing and have also been studying a three year GCSE curriculum giving more time to complete content and prepare. Our previous cohort last year were with us for only 4 years, and had a 2 year GCSE curriculum. Therefore it is reasonable to suggest we would have expected our current Year 11 students to have made significantly greater progress under this unique set of circumstances, as well as for us to benefit from some easy gains in experience based on our first year of results.

As a school we will be writing to Ofqual to inform them of our position, we are asking you as parents and students, to understand that this unique set of circumstances could mean we as a school, may have a higher proportion of students who would need and want to sit their exams next academic year if they are awarded a grade they are not satisfied with.

Our rationale for setting individual lessons and work for our Year 11 students

With the uncertainty of how grades will be awarded and the possibility of students taking GCSE exams in the next academic year, it was important that up until now we kept everybody working on their course content and revising. We now have a clearer understanding of what the government proposes, all exam content delivery is complete and therefore from Monday 27 April all Year 11 students will be following a Post 16 learning programme; we continue to emphasise the gap in knowledge and understanding between GCSE and A Level/ Vocational is a significant one. Therefore individual subjects will still continue to offer extended work in support of their subjects which is viewable on each child's google classroom for students that wish or need to take exams in September and or prepare for Post 16 courses in that subject.

We are also now able to offer additional careers-based activities, professional skills advice and pre-learning from liaison with local colleges. Our Bohunt Sixth Form has provided further educational links for each subject. We have also secured an offer from other providers such as EtonX and Barclays as additional resources to complement the curriculum offer. As you can see this information can be found by following the Post 16 link <https://www.bohuntworthing.com/students/post-16/> this is a dedicated page on our school website accessed through the parent or student tabs.

Going forward we strongly encourage all students to maintain study of some of their GCSE courses particularly those you might be taking post 16 or think you will want to sit a GCSE exam in. This will now be in the form of extended project work still set through your google classroom. As a result of this change teachers will no longer be online according to your timetable but you can email them with any issues you have.

We would then recommend students use the other links on this web page to engage with activities that keep you intellectually active and are relevant to your next steps or broaden your life skills. We will add further resources over time and will send alerts out to you when these are posted up. Please take some time as parents and students to look at the resources, discuss which ones you will tackle and when - in order to give some structure to your days.

We are asking all students to complete the ETONx course on resilience as we think this is a really useful 8-10 hours of private study that has been highly recommended to us. Please do pass feedback to your tutor or Mr Cochlin on this as you work through it.

The importance of maintaining a strong revision routine for any future exams:

A number of our parents have enquired around the government guidance issued just before Easter stating '*no further exams or additional homework*' and why we as school continue to set work. The answer is a simple one; it is important that students and parents understand that if they are unhappy with the grade awarded to them in August, they will have the opportunity to sit an exam next academic year. Although the timing of this is still not set. Should any student sit an exam, they will be able to take whichever grade is better out of the summer award or the exam result. GCSE grades are with you for life and therefore students will want grades that fairly reflect their ability. This will not be possible for all students in the country based on an algorithm and that is why we are pleased the exam option exists and we have continued to deliver lessons until now. We already know of many students who have expressed that they are keen to sit these exams so it is very important for them to maintain a strong revision routine.

The reality of sharing mock examination results:

We have been unable to share with you the most recent set of March mock results under the advice from Ofqual, which is that all information including teacher judgements are confidential. This measure has been put in place to largely stop students and parents incorrectly assuming this will be their final GCSE outcome. This is not the case.

We will not know individual outcomes for students until Results Day which is confirmed as 20 August 2020. Staff are currently working through a 7 week process to determine the grades we will be sending to the exam boards. When combined with national data these might not be the actual grades students receive and the government guidance is very clear that they should not be shared with students or parents so please do not request this information from staff.

The monitoring of previous missed lessons and impact on any behaviour record:

We had to quickly set up a system that allowed us to identify across the school students who have not been engaging with home learning and did this using class charts. This was to enable us to identify and offer help and support to those who might need it but a down side of this is that it awards a behaviour point.

Up to this point the expectation for all students until now was that they continue to engage in the curriculum work set by their teachers and therefore missed learning marks were given on a weekly basis. As an action we have followed them up with Year 11 in a way that recognises their unique circumstances compared to years 7-10. As already stated from Monday 27 April, Year 11 students will not be set individual lessons so therefore will no longer receive points for missed learning. Any points awarded up to this stage will be removed from their school records, as the points were simply a mechanism to inform parents about missed learning and for us to offer support.

Our support for plan for students taking apprenticeships or a vocational offers

Students that are going on to a vocational offer can still benefit from the additional Post 16 package such as the EtonX and Barclays Life Skills. These programmes have a range of transferable skills which will equip them with knowledge and skills for their Post 16 choices. We are also liaising with our local vocational providers to identify if there are resources they can share with us for you and will post these as they become available.

This is au revoir for now, not goodbye:

Finally it is important to say that although we managed a leaver's assembly we do not view our students as having left yet. We are still very much here to offer any support that we can. Our school office is open weekdays during school hours so please contact them with any queries you have that can then be passed on to the appropriate member of staff. As the picture over exam results develops further we will keep you updated.

This break in our personal contact very much is au revoir for now and not goodbye and we look forward to welcoming back our students to celebrate their results with them when it is safe to do so.

I hope you have found this information useful and it helps you understand the important work you can still do as the closure continues.

Thank you for reading and stay safe

Mr Whitehead.