



ST GEORGE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND FOUNDATION SCHOOL

"Every moment, every day, every individual counts"

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17th September 2020

Dear Parent

REF: GCSE EXAMINATIONS

As I am sure you are aware, we are in a time of education where the government have instigated radical changes to what we teach and how we assess pupils. As a result we have constantly reviewed our curriculum and exam entry strategy to ensure the best possible outcomes for all pupils.

By the end of Year 11 your child will have completed the equivalent of 10 GCSEs; English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, RE and three options: this equates to a minimum of 18 examinations. All of the GCSE subjects are now new specification and graded from 9-1, along with a mixture of BTEC First Awards and BTEC Tech Awards. These new specifications are considered more rigorous as many include content from the old A-Levels. This puts huge pressure on the curriculum in schools to ensure that all subjects are given adequate time for pupils to prepare fully for these examinations.

After very careful consideration we have decided that Year 9 pupils will sit one of their three Science GCSEs at the end of Year 9, followed by a second at the end of Year 10 and the final one at the end of Year 11. This will give an opportunity to reduce the pressure on the pupils when they are doing their GCSEs in Year 11 but also to fully appreciate what is ahead of them, whilst enabling them to focus on one particular Science discipline leading up to their examination.

Pupils are very capable of achieving top grades before they reach Year 11, with several grade 9s awarded to Year 9 and 10 pupils in both English Literature and the Sciences, and only a few years ago, when pupils were entered early for subjects like Mathematics, we had pupils achieving A* in Year 9! Ultimately if pupils work hard and believe in themselves they can easily achieve their target grades and higher, regardless of being entered before the end of Year 11.

If pupils are not happy with the grade achieved, although we do not advise it, there is the opportunity for them to re-sit their Science Exam. This will be done when pupils are in Year 10 and the support we can offer will be discussed on an individual basis if this situation arises.

Triple Science is one of the few remaining subject areas that has a tier entry system of Foundation and Higher. Decisions on tier entry will be made nearer the examination time and communication will be clear with both pupils and parents. Currently the Foundation tier awards grades from 1 – 5, Higher tier awards grades from 3 – 9; it is therefore important that the correct decisions are made when picking the tier entry to both not limit the pupil's grade but also to secure a grade rather than a U.

Due to the current pandemic we are not able to provide you with provisional examination dates. It is possible that exams could take place at any point during the Summer Term, until July 21st, the last day of school. We will provide the provisional dates as soon as we have them.

To support pupils with revision for this important GCSE examination, the school have revision guides for all 3 Science disciplines. These are available to purchase, via Parent Pay, at a discounted rate of £2.85 each. There is also an accompanying Work Book for £2.85 and Answer Booklet for 10p. All three can therefore be purchased for £5.80.

"For the body does not consist of one member but of many" 1 Corinthians 12:14

HOPE

FORGIVENESS

COMPASSION

FRIENDSHIP

WISDOM

There is an information evening scheduled for Wednesday, 9th December 2020 to talk you through the options process and answer any questions you may have regarding this examination entry. We will also have staff available in the Heart following the talk to discuss subject specifics. If you have any immediate queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Waddon', written in a cursive style.

Louis Waddon
Assistant Headteacher