



June 24th 2020

Dear Year 11 Parents and Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and yours safe and well.

I am very aware as I am writing to you that this last 3 months has been so far from everything you were expecting, with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic hitting at such a crucial time in the lives of our yr11 young people. The loss of those key rites of passage for our students is something we all feel very keenly. As parents and carers, to miss out on seeing your children reach those milestones, going through the challenges of GCSEs to come out the other side and celebrate, is a huge loss. I wish it were different.

When lockdown first started and I held that last morning assembly with Year 11, telling them their exams would not be taking place, I promised that we will have a very special celebration. I know that many of you have invested in beautiful prom outfits, others are waiting with uncertainty and really need to know what will be happening so you can make decisions about whether to do so. I had hoped that by this time, I could commit to a date and an event. However, the current social distancing guidance makes it clear we cannot plan for an indoor event for the foreseeable future; any gatherings will need to adhere to social distancing, even after yesterday's announcement of further relaxation of lockdown measures from July 1st.

My promise of a special event stands. But we cannot have the celebration we all long for while social distancing measures are in place. For us to celebrate properly, we need to be able to be inside and have the chance to mingle, to share memories and share food. It may be that this will be a dress up occasion – that will depend on what you and your children want once we know where and when. What I can assure you of is that this event will happen – we just do not know when at the moment.

So that leaves us with a big conundrum as to how we mark the ending of Year 11 with you for this very special group of students. For those of you who have already bought your prom outfits, we want to find a way you can celebrate wearing them but we know it cannot be a prom event at this time. For those of you who have not yet invested, we don't want to add that pressure during such difficult and uncertain times.

To try to make sure we have something that works for everyone we would like to invite you and your children to come into school on the last Wednesday of this term, July 15th to collect Hoodies and Year Books and have a special photograph taken to mark the end of this year. I know this is no replacement for a Prom but in the spirit of celebrating and making the most of these exceptional circumstances, we would love it if those of you who want to dress up do so for a special picture in our school hall – one for the history books of the future! The event will have to adhere to strict social distancing, so we will be asking you to come in at set times – details will follow. Parents and carers are warmly invited to join your children for a photograph. We will then be hosting an on-line Year 11 Graduation Assembly on Zoom on the morning of Thursday July 16th to which you and your children will be invited.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Leaman
Headteacher