

30 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Well, we are just starting our second week of approaching teaching and learning in a very different way. It is hard to imagine that circumstances have changed how we operate so dramatically and I wanted to offer you some reassurances as well as provide some new information around qualifications.

We hope that you are finding plenty of work on google classroom which I know teachers are working hard on uploading. Please be aware that some of the teachers' circumstances mean that they are also looking after their own children or they are in school supervising those children of Key Workers who have no other childcare options. This skeleton provision will continue through the Easter period and at weekends subject to need. You may find, therefore, that they may not be able to respond quickly to communications coming through, although I know they will do their best. Please also be aware that I am not expecting teachers to set work or respond to communications for the Easter two week holiday period although I'm sure they will already have suggested lots of activities your children can access.

We are working to provide some limited feedback on work and we hope that you are able to support the school's learning programmes with the many opportunities that are becoming available online, including some physical activity, reading, creativity, a bit of gardening, cooking or simply relaxing with each other. Make the most of enjoying the opportunities this enforced grounding is affording. Be assured that when school life returns to normal we will not be leaving anyone behind as we recognise that every child's personal circumstances are different.

More than anything, we don't want you to fall out at home about any of this. It's more important that you focus on how to be so closely confined as a family and how to get on. Please contact us through [general@johnbright.uk](mailto:general@johnbright.uk) if you have any immediate issues we can help you with.

#### **Update on examinations**

Qualifications Wales is the regulator of all qualifications here in Wales, Their latest information with regards to students in years **11 and 13** is:-

*"Grades for GCSE and A level qualifications in 2020 will be calculated using a range of evidence. They will be based on a combination of factors which may include marks for work completed to date, for example AS results for A level grades, and standardised teacher assessed grades.*

*Teacher assessed grades will be based on what teachers would expect a learner to achieve at the end of the course. They need to represent a fair, reasonable and carefully considered judgement of the most likely grade that might be achieved in normal circumstances. This is a professional judgement based on the combined assessment information held for that learner and will be a holistic judgement rather than focusing on a single source of evidence like mock examinations.*

As we stand today, March 30th, we have had no further guidance from Qualifications Wales; they have suggested they will be in touch with schools in April in order to move forward with this plan.

For those students completing Btec qualifications in the 6th form (or as a LINC course) those qualifications are in the same situation-we are awaiting clarity from the exam boards as to how they will award the grades. Ofqual (regulator in England) anticipate this information being available by Easter.

The situation is slightly different for those students in years 10 and 12:-

#### **Year 10 Students**

This summer students were due to sit the final unit of GCSE English Literature, and gain the final GCSE grade for this course. They will not be sitting the examination, but will be awarded a GCSE grade for this course this summer following the same principles as outlined for year 11 above.

Students were also due to sit unit exams in Science, as well as (for some) History, RE, ICT courses. Students will not be sitting these exams and they will not get a unit grade this summer. They will have two options in order to get their full GCSE grade in the summer of 2021:-

- sit only the units we had planned to take in summer 2021, with their GCSE grade based on that performance only;
- or sit the Year 10 units in summer 2021, along with the Year 11 units. They will be awarded the best grade from either route.

Students in year 12 have a slightly different situation for their AS qualifications:-

### **Year 12 Students**

This summer students were due to sit their AS exams which are now not happening. They will still be awarded AS results this summer, which will be based on a range of evidence including teacher assessment. The Welsh Government haven't told us what 'range of evidence' means at this stage.

In order to gain full A2 qualifications in the summer of 2021 students will have two options:-

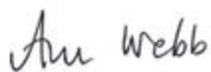
- sit only the A2 units we had planned to take in summer 2021, with the A2 grade based on that performance only;
- or sit the AS units in summer 2021, along with the A2 units. Students will be awarded the best grade from either route.

I will continue to keep in touch and inform you about national developments in education particularly for examination year groups. It is becoming increasingly clear that the government's measures to combat coronavirus are going to be in place for some time and we are all trying to adjust to this new way of living our lives. However, John Bright is not a building, it is a community of people that are all trying to do their best in these most challenging circumstances.

To all our families out there, I send you my very best wishes. It is very hollow and empty in the school building and I think all of us look forward to opening the doors to our young people again.

Please take good care of yourselves and stay safe.

Yours faithfully



**Ann Webb**  
**Headteacher**