

04 September 2015
Dear Parent/Guardian

Headteacher: Christopher Anders BA (Hons) MA

All Year 10 English and maths classes

As you will be aware we are currently in a situation where GCSE exams are continually changing and steadily increasing in challenge. In order to provide your son/daughter with the best possible GCSE outcomes we are going to marginally revise the route that they will follow from September 2015.

Since Year 9, students have been preparing for their Edexcel GCSE exams in English Language, English Literature and maths to be taken at the end of Year 11. This will continue as planned, however we are also going to provide all our Year 10 students with the opportunity to sit the outgoing GCSE examinations in English Language and maths, which still include coursework or a more streamlined and focused content. These examinations will take place in the summer term of 2016 (Year 10) and will provide invaluable examination experience for students, as well the opportunity for them to achieve an initial GCSE grade.

Regardless of achievement in the year 10 exam, students will then continue to study for the new and revised GCSE specifications, as required by the Government, in English Language, Literature and maths for final examination in the summer term of 2017 (Year 11). For students, the best grade of the two English Language and maths exams will count, however colleges and universities are likely to look more favourably on the revised specifications due to their linear nature and increased challenge, hence our decision to enter for both.

The increased content and level of challenge of the new GCSEs will make it very difficult for students to be successful if they leave their revision until just before the exam. Instead students should begin their revision and revisiting of the knowledge and skills being learnt in class from this point on, using homework and study clubs to assist their revision and understanding, as well as gaining support in any areas of difficulty.

In order to support students in developing their familiarity with the examination skills, knowledge and processes, we ask that every student owns a personal copy of the books required for the English Language and Literature exams and have a scientific calculator for use in maths lessons and the eventual maths exams. Owning these items will enable students to practise what they have learnt in class at regular intervals in order to ensure their readiness for their GCSE examinations.

We are very excited about adapting to this exam route for students and the opportunities and benefits that it will offer them. If you have any questions about this or anything else related to the English or maths GCSEs please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

Laura Hamson
Leader of Core

