

4th September 2020

Dear Ex Year 11

Updates from Stopsley

I hope you are all well and have settled into your new destinations. Please see below information that may well be useful to you regarding examination results, year books and lockers.

GCSE Results

As you know, this year's GCSE results had to be awarded differently from usual, after exams were unable to go ahead due to Covid-19. Schools and colleges were asked to use their professional experience to make a fair and objective judgement of the grades they believed a student would have achieved had they sat their exams this year, based on work that the student had already done, then to submit these centre-assessed grades (CAGs) to the relevant exam board.

Schools and colleges were also asked to make sure that, unless there had been major changes in their school or college this year, the CAGs they submitted were broadly in line with the institution's previous results in a subject. This is because, although there can be some variation from one year to another, data shows that this is normally quite small.

At Stopsley High School, we closely followed Ofqual's guidance on determining CAGs, as we were required to do. We responded to and followed the government guidance set out to ensure that the process was transparent and fair to all. Details of this are contained in the latest guidance from Ofqual - published 26th Aug [Guidance on Appeals](#)-Ofqual.

Groups of teachers and leaders in each subject worked together to discuss and agree CAGs for each student. They took into account a wide range of available evidence, including class work, mock exams and other records of student performance. This was a time consuming process, due to the quantity of data that had to be reviewed and the number of moderation stages and conversations that took place. There were 4 phases of quality assurance:

- a. Subject teachers submit CAGs.
- b. Departmental team reviewed, discussed and approved.
- c. The senior leadership used school historical data, and Fisher Family Trust data to triangulate this decision and then submitted them to an external expert to have them checked.
- d. Final sign off was by the Headteacher.

As mentioned above, the CAGs were therefore the school's considered assessment of the grade each student would have been most likely to get if they had taken their exams and completed any non-exam assessment this summer. As the Ofqual guidance linked to above makes clear, these are not the same as:

- age-related grades (usually defined as the grade a student would receive if they took the relevant exam now)
- 'working at' grades (the grade a student is currently working at)
- target grades (often set a little higher than likely to be achieved, to motivate students)

The intention was that the exam boards would moderate the submitted CAGs, to check that schools had approached this task consistently, before providing students with their final calculated grades. Unfortunately, as you will no doubt be aware, the method they used to do this proved problematic, and was likely to lead to many grades being unfairly downgraded.

The government therefore made the decision that GCSE students would be awarded whichever was higher for each subject – their CAG or their calculated grade. This is what the grades students received are based on.

The late decision to change to a different method, while necessary in the circumstances, is also far from perfect. While most students will have received grades which accurately reflect their performance and enable them to move on to their next stage of education or employment, some will be disappointed, and may feel they have not been fairly treated.

The grounds on which students can appeal their grades are fairly limited this year. The [Student guide updated 20/8](#) from Ofqual explains the grounds for appeal, and the process that should be followed. Essentially, students are only able to appeal, through their school, if they believe there has been an administrative error in communicating their grades. If you do have queries about results please read the relevant sections, particularly page 5 which outlines the appeals process.

The school has checked the grades that you have been awarded and the outcome is there were no administration errors found in communicating the grades.

If you believe your grades were wrong as a result of bias, discrimination, malpractice or maladministration, you are able to raise a complaint with the school directly (please email the exams office in the first instance), or with the exam board. The Ofqual guidance explains the process for doing this.

Finally, the government has said that there will also be an opportunity for you to resit exams in November. As stated in the letter accompanying your results you should email Mrs Blackwell, Examinations Officer at lblackwell@stopsleyhighschool.co.uk with your entry requirements by Friday 4 September, however if you

have not already expressed a wish to take exams then please do so by Monday 7th September at the latest.

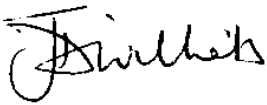
Yearbooks

These are now ready for collection at reception if you pre-ordered and paid for one. Please can you contact reception to arrange a time to collect yours. Unfortunately, you cannot come beyond reception at present as schools are not allowed any visitors, so it will just be a drop into reception to collect your yearbook.

Any locker keys?

If you did not manage to drop your locker key off and collect your deposit, please can you make an appointment to do so. This will allow us to re-allocate them to the new year 7s going forward and we can return your deposit.

Yours sincerely,

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

Mr J Williets
Deputy Headteacher