

Biddick Lane
Washington
Tyne & Wear
NE38 8AL

Tel: 0191 511 1600
Fax: 0191 417 2897

Headteacher:
Miss K Morris



Biddick
Academy

6th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope that you are keeping safe and well.

I am writing to you to share important information in relation to the national lockdown and in particular, Year 11 summer 2021 exams.

BTEC and Vocational Examination Subjects

In line with the Government guidelines and for the safety of the students, we can confirm that vocational exams scheduled for January, including BTECs, are cancelled. To support your child, we will continue to modify coursework procedures as the exam boards publish information. It is important that your child follows the guidance set by staff and accesses the support provided, as their coursework will contribute to their final grade.

Summer 2021 Exams

As you will be aware, on Monday 4th January the Prime Minister confirmed that some summer exams will *not go ahead as planned*, stating that it was not possible or fair for students. He continued by saying that the Education Secretary, Gavin Williamson, will work with the exams regulator, Ofqual, to put in place alternative arrangements for how grades will be awarded for the current Year 11 students.

This leaves a degree of uncertainty around what the alternative arrangements will look like but confirms that some form of assessment will still take place. With this in mind, it is vital that Year 11 students continue to show the positive attitude to learning that they have already displayed this year, to ensure that they are fully prepared for the alternative arrangements when they are announced by the government.

As an Academy, we are continuing to deliver all lessons remotely, with students accessing their normal timetable virtually via Microsoft Teams. After school learning and intervention sessions will also take place via Teams, with teachers continuing to set homework and assess student work as they would do when students are attending the Academy as normal.

The mock exams which were due to begin on the 18th January will be delayed until we have more information regarding how students will now be assessed in the summer. We will share the rearranged date or arrangements as soon as it is possible to do so.

We know that it is far from ideal for Year 11 students to have to contend with further disruption and change to their year of secondary education. However, by accessing all of the support available to them, it will ensure that your child is fully prepared for the alternative arrangements in the Summer. Equally important, it will support them to be ready to progress to their next stage of education or employment in September. The skills, knowledge, resilience and flexibility demanded during this time will be fundamental to your child's success moving forward.

I would like to emphasise that as a school we are always here to provide support and we aim to offer you a range of resources to support both you and your child, until the Academy is able to fully reopen. Parents/carers and students are already familiar with the process for livestreamed lessons, this will continue until February half-term. If your son/daughter is experiencing any problems accessing online learning, please contact the school Reception who will be happy to help you.

I will be in touch again in the forthcoming days, with details of how we will be moving more of our activities online, including the Year 9 Options process.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully,

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

Miss K. Morris
Headteacher