



Introduction

Recent government announcements have served to blow away the fog bank of uncertainty that has been hanging over the Summer Term, and we now have a reasonably clear view to the horizon.

The purpose of this Update is to set out the shape of the Summer Term, to address some other areas of anxiety, and to set out the School's position with regards to Centre Assessed Grades. This final matter is, of course, of concern principally to parents of pupils in Year 11 and the Upper Sixth, though all parents may be interested to know how we are managing this.

The Shape of the Summer Term

The Summer Term is, as always, shaped very largely by the demands of both public and internal examinations, and because of uncertainty regarding the way in which schools were to be required to determine Centre-Assessed Grades much of the planning for the term has been unavoidably delayed. The Summer Term calendar will therefore be published in the final week of the Easter holiday (as opposed to the final week of the Lent Term), but it may be useful for parents to see the overall shape of the term, with the most significant events, and this is to be found in the planning document which accompanies this Update.

The Working Day

We are delighted to confirm that the easing of lockdown restrictions means that from Tuesday 13 April we are able to extend the working day from 16:30 to 17:30 at the Prep and 17:40 at the College, and these are the times at which the buses will leave.

Prep Speech Day, Founder's Day and the Summer Ball

As things stand, Founder's Day and the Summer Ball would be possible from Monday 21 June, but the School's position is that there remains too much uncertainty at this stage to commit now to running these events, so it is with great regret that we must announce that there will not be a Founder's Day or a Summer Ball. Prep Speech Day will, however, go ahead, and will be held on Friday 2 July.

The plan for the Summer Term sets out the details of other significant events, but for clarity, the key dates are as follows:

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| • Friday 28 May | Farewell to the Upper Sixth | Pupils only |
| • Friday 18 June | End-of-Year Year 11 celebration | Pupils only |
| • Thursday 1 July | Head Master's College Assembly and Prizes | Pupils only |
| • Thursday 1 July | Year 8 Service and Barbecue | Pupils and parents |
| • Friday 2 July | Prep Speech Day | Pupils and parents |

End-of-Term Mailing

As we pick up steam, and look ahead with guarded optimism to the Summer Term, there are a number of important documents which the School will publish on Friday 26 March, not least end-of-term reports for those year groups that are expecting them at this stage. As previously, all these documents will be published on the Parent Portal, and you will receive at the end of term an email alerting you to the documents that have been uploaded.

Term Dates

The term dates for the rest of this calendar year are published on the website, and those for the rest of this academic year will be published very shortly.

In the meantime, please note that the Michaelmas Term will commence on Thursday 2 September.

Centre Assessed Grades for GCSE and A Level

Now that the Department for Education and Ofqual have published their guidance for GCSEs, A Levels and BTEC the School is able to set out the plan that we have for our pupils in Year 11 and Upper Sixth.

The government instructions are deliberately vague in many places, reflecting the fact that the experience of schools and pupils has varied so much across the country, but where appropriate we have followed both the letter and the spirit of the rules suggested by Ofqual's commentary in the initial consultation and in their subsequent guidance. The iGCSE boards have also now said that the iGCSE exams will not take place this summer and the process for deciding the grade for those subjects is broadly similar as it is for domestic GCSEs.

As was the case last year, schools are asked to produce the grade for each pupil entered for the GCSE, A Level or BTEC qualifications, and these must be submitted in June. The guidance says that we should use a broad range of evidence across the taught content in reaching our judgement, but centres are left to decide for themselves what is appropriate, and how far back we should go in collecting this evidence.

With this in mind, the School's view is that the best guide to how pupils would have performed in the GCSE and A Level examinations, had they gone ahead in June, is a set of formal assessments taken under exam conditions. In order to give candidates the very best chance of realising their potential and achieving grades that are both supportive and realistic, they will sit two rounds of examinations in the first half of the Summer Term, the first in Week 2 and the second in Weeks 6 & 7.

Each subject will use these assessment windows in different ways, to reflect the nature of their subject and the specification. In those subjects in which the syllabus was not completed, the pupils will only be tested on what has actually been covered. In addition, because the period of preparation and revision has been interrupted by another lockdown, some subjects will be able to give more specific guidance to pupils about the topics that will be tested. We still await the additional assessment materials, or "mini exams", that have been promised from the exam boards, but it is likely that we can incorporate these into our papers for many subjects.

In addition, wherever coursework or Non-examined Assessments (NEAs) are a part of the specification, and have been completed, we will collect and mark these as usual, and these marks will be added to the evidence used to determine the final grade. Many subjects will also be able to use some marks from classwork or preps as part of the evidence for deciding the final grade.

Subject Leads will shortly be submitting to the Senior Team their proposals for the evidence that they will use and the weighting that will be applied, and teachers will ensure that pupils are given clear instructions as to the tasks they have to complete in the next few weeks.

With regards to the **IGCSE**, the CIE exam board – which provides our iGCSE for several subjects – has agreed that, in the UK, the exams will be replaced by Centre Assessed Grades again. They specify that the school must use three pieces of evidence for each grade, including coursework where appropriate, but the expectation is that this would include some formal assessment under examination conditions where possible.

With regards to the **BTEC**, many of the units have already been completed, marked and graded. However, the interruption to studies due to lockdown is acknowledged by Pearson, the BTEC exam board, and they have allowed that schools can decide final grades without requiring all units to be completed. The PE Department will set out separately what will be required of pupils this year and the timetable for completing those units.

Each subject team will decide the grade for its pupils in early June. As was the case last year, the process will involve a discussion of each pupil to ensure that all factors appropriate to that pupil are considered, not just the headline scores. A team of senior teachers will review each pupil's results in all their subjects, and all the evidence used, to ensure that the process has been properly applied, that decisions are correct and fair, and that there are no anomalies. Only then will they be submitted to the exam boards.

The Upper Sixth leavers will receive their results from the School on Tuesday 10 August. Further details on the arrangements for results day will be published next term, but there will be the usual guidance and support for pupils applying to universities. The GCSE and iGCSE results will be published on Thursday 12 August.

If a pupil believes that there has been an injustice and that one or more of their grades is below what they might reasonably have expected they should raise this concern with the Deputy Head Academic, Mr Dixon, in the first instance. Mr Dixon will advise on the process for making an appeal, which will then be formally submitted on the pupil's behalf, along with the evidence that the school used to determine the grade. The exam board will then rule on whether to allow the appeal.

The post-exam period for Year 11 and the Upper Sixth

As last year, we will be offering a series of short life-skills courses for our Upper Sixth over the course of the two weeks after half term. These will be optional, and we will shortly be sending them a questionnaire to gauge levels of interest.

Over the same period of time, the Year 11 will be required to attend pre-A Level and pre-BTEC courses in the subjects that they have chosen to study in the Sixth Form. These courses will be compulsory, and will be accompanied by a programme of activities and broader education.

Conclusion

We are certainly not there yet, but the storm is abating, the sky is clearing, and as we look ahead to calmer waters we can begin to anticipate putting up a bit more sail.

As Churchill said of the British victory at El Alamein in November 1942, "This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

