

Curriculum update – Friday 8th January:

Dear Parents, Carers, Pupils and Students,

I'm writing to provide a brief update on a range of curriculum-related matters.

1. **Summer Exams for Y11 and Y13:** As you know, the government announced earlier this week that GCSE, AS and A-level exams have been cancelled for summer 2021, but no detail has been published yet as to the process schools and colleges will now need to follow to recommend qualification grades to the examining bodies, known as Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs). For BTEC, OCR National and L3 Extended Certificates, the picture is more confusing, as these qualifications come under the banner of 'vocational and technical qualifications' and are subject to a different decision-making process at Ofqual and the Department for Education. The message to all Y11 pupils and Y13 students is **not to worry about grades**. You **must** keep learning and engaging with work, because you have a statutory entitlement to complete each programme of study, and there will be assessed work still to be produced that will assist in that final decision-making process for your CAGs. Furthermore, you are also about to embark upon making decisions about the next phase of your career (Sixth Form, College or Apprenticeship) and you will be expected to have the knowledge, understanding and skills gained now when you start new programmes of study post-16 and post-18.
2. **Y13 mock exams:** These were due to take place in the week beginning Monday 18th January. They are postponed until (provisionally) the week beginning **Monday 15th March**. We know that Y13 students were working hard to prepare for their mocks, and that preparation should not go to waste. Also, Y13 did not sit formal Y12 mock exams due to 'lockdown 1', and mock exam data was a cornerstone of last year's CAG process. **Therefore, I urge all Y13s to keep their programme of revision on-going ready for March mocks.**
3. **Y11 Options – applying to the Sixth Form at NTS, College or an Apprenticeship:** We had hoped to be able to launch our Sixth Form virtual open evening materials on Monday 11th January, but due to the nature of this first week back, that has been put back until **Monday 18th January**. Everything Y11 pupils need to support their decision making and application process will be on our school website, and we will also be posting a hard copy of the sixth-form prospectus, course guide and application form to all households, along with a supporting letter from Mr Priddle (Head of Sixth Form). As part of the post-Year 11 planning process, Mrs Mullarkey (Careers Leader) will also be sending out details of the careers advice, information and guidance available to all Year 11 pupils, regardless of their proposed choice of next destination. A range of colleagues will be available via email (use admin@nts.cumbria.sch.uk) or telephone to answer any queries that may arise.

I will update you further as new information becomes available during the term.

Yours sincerely,

Mr N. Parker

Deputy Head - Curriculum