



The TRUE Learning Partnership



# Poynton High School and Performing Arts College

Head Teacher: Mr M Dean

Friday, 19 March 2021

Dear Year 13 Students

Congratulations on your successful return to school. You worked really well as a year group remotely and this has continued since coming back last week. I hope that you maintain these levels of effort in the final weeks before you leave. I have already written to you and to your parents about how the grades will be awarded this year and want to confirm our plans with you now in more detail.

### How will grades be awarded?

You will receive grades from the exam boards that are based on work that you have produced. Some of this might be work that you have done already in the course and some will be work that you will do over the next few weeks. For each subject you will do up to six further assessments in lessons before May half term. These assessments will be used, alongside other evidence your teachers have, to determine your grade.

### What information will we get about these assessments?

Before Easter we will send home a report which includes the topics that you need to revise for each subject. You will also receive information about the format of the assessment, the date of the assessment and advice on revision. Teachers will also post guidance on Google Classroom and talk this through with you in lessons. I know that this has already been happening this week in lessons in some subjects and this will continue next week. Teachers have been working hard to plan the topics and the assessments for you and we want to make sure that these are the right way of you demonstrating your ability.

### Will I have to revise everything like I would do in a normal year?

2021 is certainly not a normal year and it would not be fair to expect you to revise the whole course in a year when there are no public exams. You will need to revise over Easter but the content will be much reduced. This will give you the best chance of showing what you can do. The topics teachers have selected will cover a range of skills and knowledge so it is a fair assessment of your ability.

### How will teachers ensure there is a consistent standard?

Within departments teachers will standardise work so that we can be sure that the grades are fair across the board. The exam board will also sample some of the work which means they will ask to see the evidence we use to check that we are judging work in the right way.

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### **How will you ensure that I am not sitting multiple assessments on one day?**

We will plan the assessments so that you are not doing too many at any one time across your subjects.



### **What if I mess up one assessment?**

Because there will be a range of evidence you do not need to worry if one assessment goes wrong. Aim to do your best on each assessment and work hard but we will not simply be taking an average of all your marks. We need you to produce good evidence that demonstrates the standard that you are working at. One poor assessment does not rule out a good grade if overall your work is good.



### **Do we get any say in the assessments?**

Your teachers will know which type of topics usually work better than others and may talk to you about this but you will not be able to select an individual topic for your question. In these assessments the same questions must be given to all students in the year in that subject so there is a fair standard. Take advantage though of the fact that you will know more than in a normal year about what is coming up and that there shouldn't be any big surprises for you.



### **What about the Non-Exam Assessments (NEAs)?**

As I have mentioned before, your NEAs, the coursework in some subjects, will be able to count towards your exam grade so you should continue working on them where you can. These will provide very useful evidence for teachers.



### **What about students who receive access arrangements, like extra time in exams?**

If you are eligible for access arrangements these will apply to these assessments as well.



### **Last year students were rank ordered will that happen again?**

This year it doesn't matter where you are compared to other students it matters what you have produced so a rank order will not be used by the exam board. If you want a certain grade you will need to have produced enough evidence of that grade.



There is no limit on the number of grades we can award. If every student in your class demonstrated they were working at an A\* then everyone could get an A\*. What matters is that the work you produce is of this standard.

### **Should I produce some work at home now and bring it in as evidence?**

No. The assessments you will be able to use must be chosen and set by teachers across the department and where possible completed in school so that it is fair to everyone. If you do extra work it might develop your skills but teachers will not be able to use this as part of your awarded grade and it would be better therefore to focus on those pieces.



### **Last year exam boards looked at the past performance of a school will that happen again?**

The exam board will probably look to see if schools are getting grades very different to the grades they got in previous years and if they are they will sample more work to check on that school. You should not worry about this as we have a track record of very good results so that would not surprise the exam board. If the exam board checks we will have the





evidence to back up our grades because you will have produced it in assessments by doing your best.

**When will Year 13 leave school this year?**

I am afraid we do not know that yet as we are still waiting for clearer guidance. After your assessments have finished in each subject you will continue to work and all of this could be used as part of our overall assessment of you. We will update you on this as soon as we can.

**When will Year 13 get their results?**

A level results will be issued on 10 August and GCSE results will be issued on 12 August.

Before you leave school we are not permitted to tell you the overall awarded grade. The final grade should not come as a surprise to you, however, as you will have been told the marks for the work that is included in your evidence before you leave.

**What can students do if they are not happy with the grade they are awarded?**

There will be a chance to appeal to the exam board and we will get more information about that but remember that the grade can go up or down on appeal. You are more in control of the grade you get than in normal years as you will be doing several assessments rather than big exams. If you prepare for these you will be able to get a good grade. Focus now on working with your teachers so that your work proves you deserve a certain grade.

As I wrote in my last letter we are proud of the very good results that students achieve at Poynton. You have a great chance now to demonstrate your ability. Work hard, seek advice and do your best to gain the grades that you deserve.

If you have any further questions please email [exam2021@phs.cheshire.sch.uk](mailto:exam2021@phs.cheshire.sch.uk). We will issue an FAQs document to answer any additional questions that come in and will share that with you. Good luck to you as you work towards your final grades.

Yours faithfully,

*Matthew Dean*

Matthew Dean  
Headteacher

