

## **Message from Mrs Collins, Mrs Hartley and Mrs Backes for Year Eleven students**

Dear Year Eleven students

### **GCSE and GCSE equivalents - grading summer 2020**

The GCSE final grades which you will be awarded this summer will be based on teacher assessment by your teachers at Thomas Estley, but not solely, as the government has said that national trends, grade distributions and progression matrices need to be used to ensure the system is fair and students get what they truly deserve, and so GCSE awarding bodies and OfQual will be making checks against these to ensure that all schools are honest and accurate in awarding their teacher assessment grade predictions, modifying them slightly in some cases.

There will be no further examinations, supervised NEAs, etc, and this will apply across all subject areas. Obviously, some Year 11 subject courses had already completed their practicals, NEAs, etc, before schools closed due to the coronavirus outbreak, and these will be accepted and used where they are already available as part of the grades awarded.

Many thanks for your commitment in completing and submitting the additional evidence for your GCSE and vocational courses on Show My Homework, etc. The additional evidence of your current standard of work will help to inform our teachers certification grade that they will submit for you. This is vital in case any additional supporting evidence is needed to verify the teacher judgement when checks are made. We will continue to set you work and ask that you complete it to the best of your ability until we have a final and fixed date when we need to submit teacher certification grades. We have not been advised of this date yet by the Government. We will then have a vast bank of evidence to draw upon to support our decisions; this will include class work, college assessments, Year 10 exams, Year Eleven December Mocks, Year 11 AP2 grades and work completed remotely March onwards.

When we know of this deadline, we will inform you, and at that deadline point we will ask you to stop completing the work in some or most of your subject areas – see below.

### **Bespoke Thomas Estley post 16 bridging package (part of our 2020 Year Eleven Promise)**

At Thomas Estley, we are determined that this year group will not be disadvantaged as a result of the coronavirus outbreak school closures. Therefore, after this government grade submission deadline (date to be advised), we are working on a bespoke remote learning package for each Year Eleven student, in order to support you moving into post 16. For example, if you are going on to take Maths, Physics and Computing A Levels, we plan to ask local A-level providers for some bridging subject specific work that will bridge from GCSE to A-level in Maths, Physics and Computing and we will make that work available for you on Show My Homework, set and monitored by Thomas Estley teachers in those subject areas. If you are going on to study vocational subjects in an FE college, we will set some Maths and English and specific bridging work in your chosen subject area, in liaison with college tutors in local colleges, to fit the needs of your course. We will not then expect you to continue with work in other subject areas unless you plan to apply to resit them the following year, which the government has said will be possible, although they have not

published the details yet. By completing work in current subject areas now and then switching to your post 16 work in due course, it will stand you in good stead for a successful future, as part of our 2020 Year Eleven Promise to you.

### **Thomas Estley Individual Record of Achievement (part of our 2020 Year Eleven Promise)**

We have set up a data collection mechanism to gather information about your additional achievements at the college. This might be subject specific achievements, leadership achievements, membership or captaincy of a sports team, involvement in school performances, clubs, helping out or teaching younger students, etc. All teaching staff can make entries here if they choose. We will collate these into a certificate for each of you to go with your final GCSE grades, to provide you with some advantage and support at college or university interviews, in job applications, etc, moving forward. This Record of Achievement is not normally in place for Year Eleven at our college, or at other providers, and we hope that it will go some way to removing any barriers or fears for you about future career progression, as part of our Thomas Estley 2020 Year Eleven Promise.

### **Celebrating Together (part of our 2020 Year Eleven Promise)**

- We are still determined that, with a provisional date of October 29 already booked, we will host a Prom for you to come together with friends and teachers when this becomes possible, to celebrate together.
- We will be arranging a Year Eleven Awards evening in the Autumn Term, as usual, to reward excellent progress, effort and achievement in subject and other areas in Year Eleven.
- We will be printing a Year Eleven yearbook, as usual, but delaying its purchase until just after the Prom so we can include Prom pictures and other achievements in it. If you have already paid for the yearbook, we will hold an order for you, but we will communicate with you to give you an additional chance to order a one when we write to you later in the year about the Prom and Awards Evening.

Please do look after your wellbeing at this challenging time, when many adults and children are struggling with changes to their daily lives, social isolation, and lack of structure and perceived purpose. Please stay in touch with your tutors and teachers, visit our Thomas Estley wellbeing blog, <https://wellbeingatthomasestley.blogspot.com/> and use the [talk@thomasestley.org.uk](mailto:talk@thomasestley.org.uk) email address if you need any further support. Here are some other sources of support which might be useful to you:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/> (maintaining good wellbeing)
- [Thinkyouknow](#) (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- [Parent info](#) (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)

We will be back in touch with more information once it is available to us. Meanwhile we wish you all the very best from your Thomas Estley family, who are really missing you all!

***Mandi Collins, Principal***

***Janine Hartley, Year Eleven Standards Lead***

***Liz Backes, Examinations Officer***