



Highfields College  
Essex Road  
Stockport  
SK5 8DR  
Tel: 0161 406 7922  
Fax: 0161 406 0612

12<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear Y11 Leaver,

Today is a big day as we share your GCSE results with you. These, alongside the various other qualifications you may have achieved at Highfields, formally mark what you have achieved **so far** in education.

### **What were schools asked to do to give you a grade?**

I want to explain how your results were worked out this year. As you know, this year's GCSE results had to be awarded differently from usual, after A-Level and GCSE final exams were unable to go ahead due to Covid-19 / Coronavirus and the 'lockdowns' that took place across the country.

This year schools were asked – for the second year running - to use their professional expertise to make a fair and realistic judgement of the grades they believed each student would have achieved had they sat their final exams this year. At Highfields we have taken this very seriously, re-training staff on how to gain evidence and dedicating hours after students have gone home to mark, double check and organise evidence.

Teachers have been asked to look at evidence of work completed in lessons, in-house exam results, attendance figures etc. and to provide a grade. These are called 'centre-assessed grades' (CAGs) / 'teacher assessed grades' (TAGs) and had to be submitted to the exam boards in June. The exam boards have then looked at the grades submitted and using their own moderation systems, have given a 'final grade'.

### **What happens next?**

We have worked hard at Highfields to make sure every Year 11 Leaver has a college placement or other offer in September. We will continue to be available for you until at least December 2021 should things not work out as you had planned. You just need to telephone us or send an email.

If you wish to formally appeal any of your results, I'd encourage you in the first instance to contact Mrs Ryan, our Exams Officer. She will be able to discuss your concerns, and advise you on any next steps (as soon as we know the process). You may also want to talk to the college or other provider you plan to go to. They may well be flexible about their entry requirements.

If you want to re-sit any of your exams, the current plan is for a full series of exams to take place in November. We don't yet have full details of how this will work, but please let us

know if that's something you'd like to discuss. Again, you just need to telephone us or send an email.

### **Final thoughts...**

As with our Year 11s who left in 2020, we recognise it has been incredibly difficult for this Year 11s also. If anything, this year's leavers have had it harder than any before them. Not only have they had to face two lockdown periods, they have had the uncertainty each week of whether they might be suddenly sent home due to an outbreak of COVID-19 – something that feels like an invisible but ever-present menace. As a child I never had to worry about such things and most other adults didn't either.

On top of that - and this is something I am really proud of our Year 11s for – to get evidence for grades, our students this year have undertaken three sets of in-house exams alongside work in lessons – rather than the one final set of exams. On every week we have run exams, our Year 11s have turned up and applied themselves in an exemplary way.

Another positive has been the fact this year our Year 11s got to say goodbye at our Leaver's BBQ and seeing so many students attend this shows the strength of their relationship with us as a school.

I started the letter by saying today marks your education **so far** – whether you are happy with your results or disappointed, or somewhere in between, I want you to focus on 'so far'. I know from my own experience that GCSE results day is one milestone - and that there will be many more opportunities to enjoy moments of success and become what you want to be.

We will always be here if you need us and will always try to help in some way – and likewise we always love to hear from our former students and the various successes they have had in life. That's what we mean when we talk about the 'Highfields family'.

Best wishes for the future,

*Mr Grant, Headteacher*