

HBK Update, Friday 16 April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Reading tests for students in Years 7 to 10 – message from Anna Nightingale, Vice Principal

Every year students in Years 7-10 at Hinchingsbrooke complete a reading test (NGRT). This is so we can track Literacy and ensure that any student who needs extra help gets it. These tests will take place over the next 4 weeks in English lessons. The students will be informed when this will take place, and asked to bring in a **standard pair of headphones** for that lesson.

Year 11 and 13 'Study Leave' - message from Anna Nightingale, Vice Principal

As there are no exams this year and all assessments for the Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) will have taken place by May half term, we can confirm that the last day of school for both Years 11 and 13 will be Thursday 27th May. Students will not be required to attend their timetabled lessons after this date. They will however, still receive support from the school (more information on this to follow). There is also an expectation that any student applying to the Hinchingsbrooke Sixth Form will attend the Induction Week in the week beginning 5th July.

Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) update

Ms Nightingale has written separately to families in year groups that will be awarded Teacher Assessed Grades this summer, and she will be in touch again as more information becomes available. This is just some general information about TAGs for all families.

The Government announced in March that there will be no external examinations this school year and that instead students will be given Teacher Assessed Grades as their A level, GCSE and equivalent results in August. OFQUAL (the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation), the Government body charged with overseeing the Teacher Assessed Grades process, has worked with the Examination Boards to provide guidance to schools about how the grades should be determined, and there will be quality assurance procedures at both school and external levels that are designed to ensure the integrity of the final grades.

The process of arriving at grades involves subject experts (the English department, the Maths department etc) deciding on the 'body of evidence' of students' performance that they will use to determine individual students' grades in the subject this Summer. Whilst the body of evidence should be drawn from across the duration of the KS4/5 course, departments are supplementing their evidence by devising classroom-based assessments for students to do under examination conditions this half term. For example, in Maths, Year 11 students will complete a number of GCSE-style assessments this half term, which are designed to help the Maths department determine their GCSE Teacher Assessed Grades. Schools have until 18 June to submit their grades to the Examination Boards. This is a significant piece of work for teachers and heads of department and for Ms Nightingale, who is leading on the school's policy and processes.

Change of date for Training Day during the summer term – update from Simon Cooke, Vice-Principal

As the usual GCSE and A level exam timetables and processes will not be taking place this year, each school has to devise their own process for determining grades Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs) for the exam students. This is a complex process that needs to be largely completed before the half term break at the end of May, so we need to move our final **Training Day** of this year, which is currently scheduled for Friday

25th June 2021, to **Friday 28th May 2021**. Therefore, on Friday 28th May students will not attend school and parents/carers should make their own arrangements for child care, where this is needed. We are very sorry for any inconvenience caused by this late change of date; final details from the government regarding the TAGs process were only released during the Easter holidays. Thank you for your understanding as we make plans in response to ongoing government guidelines and requirements. To be clear, **Friday 25th June 2021** will now be a normal school day with attendance expected of all students in year groups 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12.

Rapid testing of Students and Staff – update from Simon Cooke, Vice-Principal

When schools re-opened their gates on Monday 8th March the government required schools to offer all students 3 Lateral Flow tests, supervised by a trained adult, within a period of 2 weeks. We are very pleased that approximately 95% of our students took up this opportunity, so over 5,000 Lateral Flow tests were carried out. The testing programme has now successfully converted to students self-administering tests at home, twice a week, then reporting the results to the school and to the NHS; this has been the case for staff for some time. This programme has been successful in identifying a small number of positive cases, with only a very small number of students needing to isolate as a result. We are very pleased with the levels of engagement as this is greatly helping to keep the whole school population as safe as possible at this time.

What is teaching?

My most recent blog is about teaching. If you would like to, you can read it here: <https://learningisthething.com/?p=72>

We are Hinchbrooke.

Mark Patterson
Principal