

Dear Year 11

It is now nine weeks since we saw you last, so I thought I ought to send you all a message. Tomorrow would usually, in all likelihood, have been the start of your study leave. You would be well into your exams and the light would be at the end of the tunnel. You would be in summer uniform for the last time and you would be enjoying the sun during breaks and lunch times. Tomorrow you would have brought in old school shirts and written messages all over each other, as well as maybe drawn a variety of images, a proportion of which would have been obscene!

You would also be experiencing workload like you have never known before, and pressure like you would not have known before. Although that might sound like a good thing to have missed out on, I really don't see it that way; doing those exams and working under that pressure is a key thing in you developing the habits you need when you go onto the next step. However, I am sure you will get over that and wherever you might end up next year will understand the situation, and compensate somehow. For example, those of you coming to Reepham College will be sent compulsory summer tasks to complete for your preferred subject choices, and you will be tested on them in the second week back in September.

I imagine many of you will be feeling really deflated, not getting the chance to do those exams. Do not worry, there are some things that are simply beyond your control, and there is nothing any of us can do to affect the situation. More of you will probably feel you have been robbed of the sense of celebration the end of exams brings, along with the Prom, which is always a really fantastic evening. Although we cannot guarantee what and when, we will have a celebration. Those of you who listen in assembly will have picked up, consistently throughout the last five years, that I have thought you a fantastic year group. The way you have engaged with school, and with each other, has been terrific. Some squabbles along the way, of course, but you have been a friendly, positive and harmonious group from start to finish.

For now, be positive. You will be aware that as a school we have had to recommend GCSE grades for you all, which has been based upon your teachers' absolute best prediction at this stage. We send them off and then the exam boards will adjust as they feel fit, so we cannot be sure about what you will be awarded in the summer. So, fingers crossed for all of you.

Finally, some advice. Do not see this summer simply as the longest holiday you are ever likely to get, but see it as an opportunity to be productive. Do some school type work, especially in the areas you think you will be pursuing in September. Do also take time to rest; many of you work so hard that at times you find it hard to slow down and just take time to relax without feeling guilty. Everyone deserves to relax and rest, so enjoy it. Lastly, keep in touch with your friends and look after each other. Do not let anyone slip into social isolation, and make the effort to include others in what you are doing.

We will be in touch again with information about exam results collection later in the summer.

Best wishes everyone!

Mr Gibbs

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