



Pittville School
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Headteacher Richard Gilpin

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Dear Parents/Carers

As you know, the new style GCSE English language and GCSE English literature qualifications have now been running for three years. Both these two qualifications have 100% exam content. In 2017 when Year 11 students reached the end of their academic year they sat two examinations for GCSE English language and two exams for GCSE English literature, four exams in all; seven and a half hours of exams.

After further consultation, lengthy consideration of the courses and evaluation of this year's Literature results, we have decided that all students in Year 10 will sit their GCSE English literature exams at the end Year 10, in May 2020. We believe that this will enable students to concentrate fully on just two exams in Year 10 (GCSE English literature) and then only two exams at the end of year 11 (GCSE English language). This will benefit students by allowing them to manage the vast amount of information they need for four exams into two 'manageable chunks'.

As the literature exams are 'closed book', this presents a key issue for our students. We feel that after a full year concentrating on literature texts only, students will be ready to sit the exam in May 2020 rather than retain this information for another year, revisiting key texts throughout year 11.

In their English lessons in Year 9 students have not only been introduced to the key reading and writing skills for GCSE but they have already studied 'An Inspector Calls', one of their set texts for GCSE literature and have already begun analysing some of the poetry from the exam anthology. Students have been assessed after each unit of work under strict exam conditions to mimic the expectations of the exam. Students have also been exposed to exemplar materials and the marking criteria for the literature GCSE questions too.

By sitting the Literature examination in May 2020, our students can fully focus on the second English qualification GCSE English language, starting this at the end of year 10 and continuing in year 11. This will allow students to solely concentrate on GCSE language skills without having to revisit the literature set texts in their last important year at Pittville. Year 11 is a challenging year for any student. We believe that reducing the number of exams the students sit in year 11 will directly benefit the students by taking away some of the stress associated with their final year of study.

You may also be aware that both GCSE English literature and GCSE English language are now subjects that no longer have foundation or higher tiers. Therefore all Year 10 groups have the opportunity to gain the best grade they can whatever group they belong to. Please be assured we will be doing everything we can to maximise your child's potential and help them gain the best grade they can.

Finally, should you like to find out more information about the literature course or ask any questions, we will be holding a GCSE 'drop in' literature forum for year 10 parents on Monday 7th October 2019 from 6:00pm to 6:30pm in Room 3.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L Davies

Head of English and Film Studies

