

Our ref OFA/ABS/TC

8 October 2013

Dear Parent/Guardian

I write to you concerning our plans for GCSE entry in Mathematics and English for Year 11 students.

As you know, for some years we have given students the opportunity to take their GCSE in these subjects in November of Year 11 after a full and intensive preparation programme. The reason for this has been that, in cases where students have done less well than we hoped, there has been a second opportunity to take the examination in June of Year 11. Re-entry is planned with the aim of achieving a higher grade following further intensive teaching and practice, and with the benefit of having practised the examination once already.

Last week, with no warning, and with immediate effect, the government announced that only the first attempt at a GCSE would count. The government has taken this step because it believes that giving a young person more than one chance to pass an important examination is wrong, and that they should be given one opportunity only.

Given the importance of GCSE results not only to students taking them but to the academy, we feel we have no alternative but to withdraw most students from the November GCSE sitting. This is because we cannot now take the risk that they may not achieve their full potential at this time. We have taken this decision with great regret, because we believe we had a good system in place which gave students the best possible chances of success.

Some students are completely prepared for the November exam(s) and are preparing to take them at this time. We will, however, give these students a 'mock' examination in the academy beforehand and may withdraw their entry if they are unlikely to fulfil their potential in November.

Thank you once again for your continued support. Please rest assured that, whatever decisions are made in London, we will continue to do everything we can to help your child secure the best possible grades in all his or her GCSEs.

Should you need any further clarification or information, do not hesitate to contact us at the academy.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Burns'.

Andrew Burns
Principal