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Waterford and Wexford
Education and Training Board

Principal's Message to 3rd Year Junior Cycle students and their parents

January 25th 2021

Dear students/parents,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well during this emergency period of remote teaching and learning. I know how frustrating the situation is for you as you prepare for Junior Cycle exams.

We have decided to cancel the mock examinations this year.

This was not an easy decision. The mocks have always been an important part of preparation for the Junior Cert. However, in the current circumstances, with so much uncertainty about when schools will re-open and exactly what format the Junior Cert 2021 will eventually take, we feel that when school does reopen, students will all benefit more from an additional two weeks of in school tuition than from sitting mock exams. Teachers will continue to work with their students, remotely and when the school reopens, to help them prepare for sitting the exams.

This decision regarding the mocks is the only decision about mock exams that will bring some degree of certainty to the situation. The decision was taken after considerable consultation was carried out with staff, parents, and students. This decision is the preference of a large majority of our school community, and in my view, is the best decision we can make at this time.

My advice to 3rd year students is to continue to prepare calmly and carefully for the Junior Cert. There is considerable speculation as to what exactly is going to happen with the exams; but whatever happens, continuing to study, continuing to learn, whether remotely or in-school, will only help students to do well in the end.

It is important for students to pace themselves. Online working is tiring. If students try to study all day and all night they will struggle to cope and will eventually burn out. Likewise, if they stop working altogether, they will struggle to get going again when we reopen. Students should make sure they get enough sleep, get some exercise, eat healthily, and continue to follow public health guidelines to play their part in keeping virus numbers low in our community.

Those of you who have made online payments for mock examinations will be refunded. This may take a little time, but we are hopeful that the timing of this decision will mean we don't experience the kind of delays we have had with other refund processes.

We will keep you updated as the situation develops over the coming days and weeks. We look forward to, and hope for, the day when we can safely welcome all of you back to school.

Best wishes,

Paul Glynn, Principal