Dear Parents/Carers

**GCSE Computer Science – Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)**

You may have seen coverage in the media surrounding the exams regulator, Ofqual, and their decision to consult regarding changes to the GCSE Computer Science qualification. As you may be aware, the qualification includes a ‘Non-Examined Assessment’ component that takes 20 hours of lesson time and counts for 20% of the final GCSE grade.

This is marked internally and then moderated by the exam board. The set task was released on 1st September 2017 and our Year 11 students have been preparing for this assessment and undertaking the design and programming tasks during lesson time. Ofqual are concerned about the integrity of this component of the GCSE course as they have found that tasks and solutions have been discussed online, in breach of exam board rules.

This could give an unfair advantage to students elsewhere in the country that may have accessed this confidential information. At Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School, we have fully observed the regulations and exercised a high degree of control during the assessment period (for example, students are barred from the Internet during the assessment and all exam materials have been kept securely).

After a consultation period, Ofqual have announced this week that the task will now not contribute to a student’s overall 9 to 1 grade. Ofqual have stated that, while not contributing to a student’s grade, the task will continue to be an important part of the qualification with the set tasks set by the exam board still needing to be completed as planned.

Learning about a high-level programming language and having the opportunity to show that students can use it to solve problems is an important aspect of the Computer Science course of study. Completing the task will ultimately benefit students in their exam performance. Exam papers will not be changed. Students will not have to learn any new topics or prepare to answer different types of question.

I have included a link to the announcement regarding the revised arrangements for GCSE Computer Science on the Ofqual website:

**https://www.gov.uk/government/news/revised-arrangements-for-gcse-computer-science**

Should you have any further questions, please contact your son/daughter’s Computer Science teacher Miss F Niyas ([fniyas@boteler.org.uk](mailto:fniyas@boteler.org.uk)). I have also attached a letter to students from Ofqual.

Yours faithfully,



Mr J Koltan

Senior Assistant Headteacher (Pupil Progress, Assessment and Curriculum)