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Dear Parent/Carer

9M Fast Track Spanish

I am writing to you to outline the schedule for fast track students for the new academic year.

The examination consists of 4 components.

The listening and the reading components are examined in a terminal examination. This will take place on 20th May 2016. These two skills will also be tested in mock examinations which take place in December and March. Students can be entered at foundation or higher level for these papers; their performance in the mock examinations will be a strong determining factor as to which level is most suitable for each student in each skill. We are practising these skills in class on a regular basis and students have homework related to them, too.

The speaking and writing components are assessed over the course of the year as Controlled Assessments (CAs) and are submitted to the examination board. Whilst we indicate to students that features of their work may be indicative of a certain grade, it is important for everyone to be aware that the examination board mark these components. We cannot issue students with a definitive grade for their performance. Ideally, students do just two speaking CAs and two writing CAs. It is permissible to do more than two of the tests but this is not the preferred arrangement as it takes up students' time and efforts which are best spent on other parts of the course. However, if a student performs below expectations, they are encouraged to sit a 'refreshed' test; this is a test with some similar components and some different ones to the one which they originally sat.

The first CA in speaking is scheduled for late November and a writing CA will take place in December. A further CA in writing is scheduled for February and the second CA in speaking is scheduled for March. Exact dates for these will be determined nearer the time and CAs will always appear on *Show my Homework*.

It goes without saying that the demands of this year do require real application from our students. Most of them respond to this admirably and recognise that this is no longer a rehearsal but the real thing. We do appreciate that this is a stressful year for fast track students and seek to support them as fully as we can. All students are welcome at the Spanish lunchtime club on a Wednesday where one-to-one support is often available. We will also be offering after-school support to selected students. However, it is worth pointing out that CAs are set as a task over a two-week period and during this time, staff are no longer allowed to support students with their work.

Should you have any further questions about the examination process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mr M Bolton

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