



20 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

### **Teaching and Learning during school closure**

The government has announced that UK schools will close from this evening but will remain open to children of key workers (e.g. emergency services, NHS staff and delivery drivers) and those who are vulnerable (have a social worker or an Education, Health and Care Plan - EHCP). Students who do not fall into these categories should stay at home. We do not at this time know when school will resume as normal. Parents and carers who are key workers should see our previous communication sent this morning with guidance around how to let us know if you are a key worker and intend to send your son/daughter into school.

We are very aware that parents and carers of students who were due to sit examinations this summer will be concerned, especially those of Year 13 students who are relying on examination outcomes for entry to university or apprenticeship places. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has confirmed that exams in May and June will be cancelled. The government has however assured that pupils will get the qualifications they need for their future, but at time of writing the specific arrangements for this are yet to be communicated. Until we know any further information we are encouraging students to continue to revise and prepare as normal. As soon as further details become available we will share this information with both students and parents at the earliest opportunity. In the meantime we will continue to teach as effectively as possible and students will continue to learn until we know how students' qualifications will be determined.

In addition to subject specific online resources, we are currently using Google Classroom to set work for students who are unable to be in school. If your son/daughter is struggling to log in and access any online resources, please ask them to email their sixth form mentor or subject teacher, but please be aware that many staff are not following their normal working routine and therefore may not be able to respond immediately.

Universities may be amending their offers to students based on the changed situation - if you are a parent/carer of a Year 13 student who has applied to university please do advise students to check their emails regularly to see if anything has changed with their offers. If you have any concerns, I would suggest students contact the universities directly, or contact myself or John Barron, deputy Head of Sixth form, for more guidance.

We would suggest that students continue to adhere to their normal lesson timetable in order to provide structure and routine. Any completed work should be safely stored or submitted following teacher instructions. Please discuss with your son/daughter the importance of using the time they are working at home to ensure they are engaging with learning so that they don't develop gaps in their knowledge. This is especially important for Year 12 who will be potentially home learning a considerable amount of their curriculum. We will endeavour to ensure that all students can access these resources regardless of their needs, but can we ask you to be patient in these challenging circumstances as usual working practices change for staff.

I have listed exam boards for each subject below so that you can keep up to date yourself, but I would also encourage any Year 13 students or Year 12 students preparing for AS Levels and internal mock examinations to be downloading past papers and mark schemes (all Y12 students are due to take internal mock examinations in June), as this is a highly effective revision strategy. For Y13 classes, many subjects have already finished teaching the required content and are already revising and recapping. For subjects where there is still content to be covered, contingency plans are in place. The key point to remember is that all students across the UK are in the same situation; therefore our students are not at any disadvantage.

If teacher assessments are required as part of the allocation of results, we will be stringently following whatever guidelines are provided to be as fair and consistent in our assessments as possible, and would like to reassure students who may feel concerned about their performance in assessments to date (for example mock examinations) that we will be as aspirant as possible in our decisions: all staff are committed to obtaining the best results and outcomes for our students.

### **EXAM BOARDS**

- AQA <https://www.aqa.org.uk/> - Physical Education , French, Geography, German, Spanish, Biology, English Literature, English Language, Physics, Psychology, Sociology, History, Extended Project Qualification, Art
- EDEXCEL <https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html> - Maths, Politics, Health and Social Care, Russian
- OCR <https://www.ocr.org.uk/> - Chemistry, Computer Science, Religious Studies
- WJEC/Eduqas <https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/business/as-a-level/> - Business

In addition, due to the school closure we will be cancelling the planned Y12 parents' evening scheduled for next Thursday 26th March with a provisional rescheduled date of Thursday 25th June (assuming school is open as usual by that date). The Y13 parents evening (invited students only) scheduled for Thursday 2nd April is also cancelled.

Finally, I would like to reassure Year 13 students that although we cannot arrange a celebration/leavers' event to mark the end of their time with us at present as not all students would be able to attend this and due to the school closure, we fully intend to organise an event later in the year, ideally in the first week of September.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding your son/daughter's learning or access to resources, please don't hesitate to contact me and thank you for your continued support. I do hope that the information provided in this letter is useful.

Yours sincerely



Caroline McClean  
Assistant Principal and Head of Sixth Form