

Dear Parents / Carers

### **Return to school date**

You will have seen the government have announced schools will not reopen until 8th March at the earliest, and that they will give us a minimum of two weeks notice for when they do decide upon. Clearly this means a continuation of the current online learning arrangements we have. Although I am really pleased with the way this is going, we will look to keep what we do as fresh and interesting as possible for our students. Of course we believe that no matter how good it is, remote learning is a second best arrangement to actually attending school, although it has become clear that many students find this way of working incredibly well suited to them.

### **Online learning**

Attendance in online lessons in the College has been simply amazing, with hardly a single student missing a lesson at all. Attendance in KS4 has also been really strong, although sadly a small number of individuals have not engaged as we would want. Obviously College and KS4 students are on exam courses, and it is important they keep their motivation up, especially in Years 13 & 11, whilst we wait to see how we have to establish their Centre Assessed Grades (CAGs). I may have said already, but the move to CAGs is the right move and a positive one for all of us; students can work hard to show us their quality, trusting the school to do all it can give them the grade that really reflects their ability and performance. You know we will let you know more as things become clearer.

Lessons in KS3 have also been very well attended, and we are really pleased with the independence and motivation being shown by our younger pupils. There is no doubt we can see some younger classes are not as comfortable with the ICT requirements of working online, but this situation is undoubtedly improving their competence weekly. If you can see that your child is really struggling with understanding Teams, please get in touch and we will find a way to support them. If you are worried that your child is not making the progress they would in school do not worry. The quality of the online lessons is now so much better than during Lockdown1, as long as they attend what we are delivering they will be fine, and not fall behind.

### **Please do not try to contact teachers during live lessons**

If as parents you have any questions or queries about anything can I please remind you to contact school in the usual way. It is not acceptable to use any live lesson time to query anything with teachers, and you simply must not, at any point, 'join' a live lesson.

### **Supporting the national lockdown**

Some of you would rather your children were in school to do their online work, but as you know this is only possible if you are a critical worker and them being at home would prevent you from going out to work. This rule is to support and promote the national distancing agenda, and we all need to stick to it. Of course we all want pupils to make as much progress as possible, but for this short time the national safety agenda has to be prioritised; although there appear to be some signs of improvement in infection rates, our hospitals are still completely flat out trying to cope, and every single opportunity to reduce mixing should be taken. I hope that the quality of the remote lessons you have seen your children engaging in gives you a reassurance that progress is still being made.

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### **Covid19 testing**

Thank you to those of you who have returned consent for your children to be tested using the Lateral Flow tests we have in school. If we do not receive consent from you we will not be able to include your child whenever it is that we do return to school. If you have not received an email regarding this, please check your Junk mail, as it seems some email providers recognise it as a mass email, and divert it before you get the chance to see it. Please be reminded that this is not compulsory, and completely consensual, and that students aged 16 and over can give their own consent.

Can I finish by thanking you all for the support you show the school. This is a partnership, based upon mutual understanding and support. As always, please get in touch if there is anything you think we can help with, and we will be pleased to do so if we can.

Regards

Tim Gibbs

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