

January 15th 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Remote Learning

First of all may I begin by thanking so many of you who have sent messages via email or in phone calls expressing your thanks for the efforts of staff regarding remote learning - such encouragement is really appreciated. Schools have come a long way very quickly with remote learning and we will continue to develop our provision for as long as we are in this situation.

I would never advocate a 100% live lessons and one of the reasons is because I do not think it is good for young people to sit in front of a screen for that length of time. Please do not worry if your son or daughter chooses to do some exercise during a lesson time that is not live and catches up on that learning later in the day. We have a responsibility to protect their mental health during this time.

The Covid 19 section of the website has been updated this week and has some short video explanations of how to access different aspects of remote learning. There are also links to useful sites for protecting children's wellbeing during this time as well as links to various Government documents. The weekly letter will also be posted in that section.

From next week we will introduce an opportunity for students to meet with their mentor through Teams between 8.55 and 9.05 on a Tuesday and Thursday. We will also begin to post a weekly assembly which will also be on the Covid section of the website.

It is obvious from the news that there are still a lot of discussions to be had on just how teacher assessment will work for Year 11 this year. The Department for Education has certainly not ruled out the idea of some external assessment and a consultation is due to be launched by Ofqual tomorrow. I can only repeat what I have said several times - it is really important that Year 11 continue to work and engage with learning. This is not a time to take their foot off the pedal or think they can be using their learning time to engage in other activities. They should certainly not be engaging in any paid work during the school day.

Free School meals

From Monday families entitled to Free School Meals will receive a voucher from Edenred to spend at a supermarket. The system is the same as was operated during the first lockdown. Free School Meal children who are in school will not receive a voucher as they get lunch in school.

Positive coronavirus cases

The Department for Education still wants us to return notification of any positive cases of Coronavirus among students even during lockdown. If your child tests positive, please let us know in school.

Parents Evenings

We have bought into the school cloud system this term so that we can have virtual parents evenings where you will be able to have meetings with your child's teachers through any device that has a microphone and camera. I will send the details of the system, which is very easy to use, about two weeks before each evening – I sent out the Year 10 information yesterday.

Dates:

Year 10	Thursday January 28 th
Year 9	Thursday February 11 th
Year 8	Thursday March 4 th
Year 7	Thursday May 6 th

With best wishes

Andrew Waller

Headteacher