

Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

Registered in England and Wales, Company No 07721932

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Our Ref: MQ/SM

15 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

For more weeks than I care to remember, the agenda for my weekly letters has often been steered by Cabinet Office announcements on a Sunday afternoon. This week the agenda is now being set by the school; we have started to hold face-to-face meetings in school, at a safe social distance with Year 10 and Year 12; Year 10 are engaged in an academic review, Year 12 in subject reviews. It has been an absolute delight to see students back in school.

Although only two days in, all the students I have spoken with have found the sessions beneficial. The meetings have also started to provide us with the information needed to shape the rest of the term for these year groups.

Remote Learning

In my weekly letter and in the Oaklands News, remote learning is a recurring theme. The vast majority of parents are happy with the content, quality and quantity of delivery. The challenge is with requests at both ends of the 'remote' spectrum: for more 'live online lessons' and for more 'traditional resources', in about equal measure. However, by far the greatest concern voiced by parents remains access to technology. The number of youngsters who do not have access to a PC, laptop or tablet remains very small. However, the number of families where resources are shared around is significant. One parent reminded me of the advice we have given out before, encouraging parents not to place a computer in a child's bedroom but have it in a shared location in the house. Last week staff undertook training on the use of recorded video and audio, this will feed into the evolution of our use of remote learning platforms over the coming weeks.

At the start of lockdown, when we offered emergency provision, fewer than 10 families took this up; we now have 90 on the list and I expect this to increase further. Alongside this, we have provision for Year 10 and Year 12. So that we can meet the Government guidance, groups are small; this is particularly labour intensive. We will shortly approach a point where half the teaching staff will be engaged with work onsite. When staff are in school undertaking this work they cannot, at the same time, be setting remote learning or managing queries on Teams in real time. Please be aware of this when supporting your child with home learning.

Consolidation Week for Key Stage 3 - 22nd June

We are now only a few days away from the start of consolidation week. Around the middle of this half term, KS3 students would normally experience Challenge Week. This year we are going online with Consolidation Week. During this week, no new work will be set for Year 7 to Year 9. Students can either use the week to catch up, consolidate learning, or engage in some of the activities that we will be posting online. Mr Bamford will be writing to parents in Years 7-9 before the end of the week.

Future Provision for Year 10 and Year 12

We are now in a position to share the shape of the week commencing Monday 22nd June. I will write again on Thursday to confirm the details to Year 10 and Year 12 once we have analysed more information from the academic review. We would like to arrange four morning sessions for most students with an additional 5th session for students that have found remote learning particularly challenging.

Year 10 (All details to be confirmed)

Week commencing 22nd June

Your child will attend school for one day and the day will be a blend of Core subject lessons (English, Maths, Science and RE)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10 Ca	10 Cl	10 Do	10 Mg	Specific on line remote interventions by invitation
10 St	10 Mt	10 Te	10 Vp	

Week commencing 29th June

Your child will attend school for one day and this will be a blend of their chosen Option X subject and Core subject lessons.

Week commencing 6th July

Your child will attend school for one day and this will be a blend of their chosen Option Y subject and Core subject lessons

Week commencing 13th July

Your child will attend school for one day and this will be a blend of their chosen Option Z subject and Core subject lessons.

Year 12 (To be confirmed)

Week commencing 22nd June through to 13th July inclusive

In school lessons, approximately half day session, one per subject across the week.

Year 7- Year 9

I was surprised, but pleased, that the Government guidance now allows us to hold face-to-face sessions with other year groups, however, it is unlikely that we will be in a position to bring all year groups back for limited face-to-face contact. We are now considering what we could do for Year 9 and some of our youngsters in KS3 who have found remote engagement challenging. I hope to write to Year 9 parents before the end of the week.

September 2020

I sincerely hope that by September schools will be back to normal, the key to unlocking this is social distancing; there is some speculation that this will be reduced to one metre. This would relieve the pressure considerably but would not allow the school to operate in 'normal' mode. We have started to look at our September inset time, traditionally we have two inset days followed by a phased return for Year 7. If restrictions continue this may not be possible. I am reluctant to move events on the calendar, however we may have to at relatively short notice. Timely guidance from the Cabinet Office will help us plan before the summer break.

I have been asked about the Autumn series of exams for Year 11 and Year 13. The Government have issued a consultation on this, so at this juncture there is no guidance. Once this has been published, we will update our retake policy before the results are issued.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

There is a letter on the website for Year 9 students and parents from Mrs Hoar, the DofE Co-ordinator for Oaklands. Further details regarding signing up for the award will be issued once we have clarity as to how it will run next academic year:

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/students/duke-of-edinburgh/>

Support for Parents

Lee Haywood, our E-Safety consultant, is running a parent workshop. This Zoom session is on Tuesday 16th June at 10am (lasting 45 minutes) and is on **How to start a conversation with your children about their online world**. If you wish to book a place, please follow the link below:

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/how-to-start-a-conversation-with-your-children-about-their-online-world/>

Access to the School Site

Our colleagues next door in St Peter's Catholic Primary School have had to extend the arrival and departure times for their pupils in order to maintain social distancing rules. We have agreed that we will ask our parents, carers and students, as well as our staff, not to use the St Peter's entrance to access the Oaklands School for the foreseeable future. All access to the school will therefore be via the Oaklands main gate. I would appreciate your co-operation in meeting this additional safety precaution.

Reminders

Year 9 careers

Careers information for Year 9 Using the Unifrog, the web-based

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/parents/ks4-transition/>

Critical worker

If require a place in school for your child, please email Provision@oaklandscatholicschool.org stating your child's name, tutor group and the days you require a place. Please see previous correspondence from the school.

Use of public transport

It is now compulsory to wear a mask on public transport please can parents ensure that they provide their children with what they require for their journey to and from school.

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/coronavirus/>

I am sorry for another lengthy letter, but it is important that I outline as much of the detail as I can relevant to as many parents as possible as well as painting the wider picture.

Thank you for everything you are doing and your wider messages of support.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Quinn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mr M Quinn
Headteacher