

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

Headteacher: Matthew Quinn B.Ed (Hons), M.A., NPQH

Our Ref: MQ/SM

19 March 2020

Dear Year 11 Parents and Carers

There are some letters that I simply don't relish writing, and this is one of them.

The Government has made the decision to cancel the May and June exam season. However, they have indicated that students will get the qualifications they need.

I am fully aware of the anxiety and stress this is causing Year 11 students, particularly with the loss of purpose. The cancellation of the May and June exam season has left a vacuum; I am deeply sorry about this. Schools are about more than exams, but for Year 11 this was their primary focus at this time of year.

If students are to be awarded grades, there are two possible ways this could occur:

- Exams are rescheduled for later in the year
- Data, based upon mock performances and predictions, is used to award grades. Most schools are within a percent or two when we forecast around this time of year

There may be other routes, or a hybrid solution, we wait for further guidance, which we expect to receive tomorrow. None of this, you might think, feels satisfactory, but then these are unprecedented times. We are in a national emergency when so much of what we saw as normal, even last week, has now faded away. Rest assured there will be a system-wide solution, as opposed to schools making decisions individually.

As a result of this situation we have decided to release Year 11 at the end of the day today. **They will not be expected to attend school on Friday 20th March.** I appreciate that a forced closure of a school is not a fitting way to end this phase in a youngster's education; it sits very uncomfortably with me.

Unfortunately, the Year 11 Prom has now had to be cancelled. There may be a way to celebrate their time at Oaklands in the Autumn but we will review this once this crisis is over.

With the uncertainty of this situation, planning lessons and setting remote learning is problematic. I have asked staff to put this on hold for Year 11 until I receive information from the exam boards. There are also issues related to returning text books and the like. I will confirm arrangements for this in future correspondence.

I will write to you again as soon as I know more.

You and your families remain in our prayers.

Yours sincerely

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

Mr Matthew Quinn
Headteacher