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Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust
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Registered in England and Wales, Company No 07721932

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Our Ref: MQ/SM

14 August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that you are enjoying the summer holidays and have been able to make use of the good weather where we have had it.

As I mentioned in my letter at the end of term, we will be providing regular updates to parents over the summer holiday period, given the ever-changing situation in relation to Covid-19 and education. A number of announcements have been made over the last few weeks so my second letter over the holiday is timely. I will endeavour to keep it short as I'm very aware that some will be relishing the break from all things school related.

A Level Results

Yesterday Year 13 students received their A Level results. Although the A Level courses were truncated by school closure, the outcomes are a credit to their hard work and that of our very talented and committed teachers. The school continues to justify its strong reputation at Advanced Level and it is fantastic to see the progress made by many of our students from entry into Year 7 through to Year 13. The high grade profile achieved by our students will mean that the majority should gain entry to the university of their choice. There are a number of notable successes with students achieving Oxbridge places, obtaining the necessary grades to do medicine and other high profile degree and apprentice courses; this is to be celebrated.

As you are aware, this year the exam boards have calculated student grades. Much has been published in the media related to the unfairness of this process. We are currently analysing the exam board calculated grades and will be making the necessary representation to support students.

Transport to School

Last week the Government announced a package of measures to assist in home school transport. In short, this will allow schools and bus companies to arrange additional transport where Covid-19 restrictions limit capacity. Unfortunately, this is not a precise science, our transport profile to and from school changes year to year and term to term. In addition, following the Government guidance, we are encouraging as many students as possible to walk or cycle to school. To assist the bus companies, we require an accurate picture of students' travel arrangements for the first half of the Autumn term. Please could you therefore complete the attached survey by following this link (it should take no more than a minute to complete):

[Survey](#)

Calendar for 2021

The term dates for next academic year have already [been published](#). We will issue a school calendar earlier next term with a number of provisional dates. Whilst social distancing and a ban on gatherings remains in force, there are many school events that currently 'hang in the balance'. Because of the lead time, timely decisions will have to be made early this term for events in the Spring 2021. I appreciate this may cause some disappointment.

Exam Dates for 2021

I had hoped to provide you with confirmation of the dates for the Summer 2021 exam series for new Year 11 and Year 13; Ofqual recently consulted on this. Unfortunately, they were unable to provide schools with any clarity on the timing of exams for next summer. This continues to be a source of frustration. When we know more, I will let you know.

Foreign Holidays and Quarantine

I know many families have had their summer holiday plans decimated this year. The issue of quarantining is still a hot topic. No doubt this will continue if infection rates in Europe keep rising. My sympathy if you have been 'caught up' in the change of guidelines and had your holidays affected by it. It is possible to envisage a scenario where returning from a foreign holiday necessitates a family quarantining after the start of term. This means they must return to their home immediately after entering the UK and remain there for 14 days. Students cannot attend school; parents cannot go to work. Quarantine information can be found on the Government website.

It is not my place to dictate to families what they do over the summer, much less tell them where they can go on holiday. For many families the last four months have been a challenge and a break away is well deserved. However, I am sure all parents recognise the importance of a 'clean' start to the Autumn term for students. We will not be penalising parents whose plans have been affected by any short notice changes in Government guidance regarding foreign travel if parents provide us with evidence of their return date and the country where they were on holiday so that we can code the absence appropriately. This evidence can be in the form of airline / ferry tickets scanned or photographed and sent along with a message to our Attendance Officers by email absence@oaklandscatholicschool.org

Face Coverings

Over the holiday, the use of face coverings in many situations has changed. It currently remains the case that Government guidance does not recommend the use of face coverings in schools. However, we will keep a close eye on the guidance over the coming weeks and will inform you if there is any change to the government's position on this. I will return to this issue in my next letter.

Winter Flu Vaccinations

The Department for Health and Social Care has recently announced an expansion to the winter flu vaccination programme to include students in Year 7. More details of this will be available during the Autumn term.

End of the School Day

Whilst the Covid-19 regulations remain in place we have decided to slightly stagger the release of students. At the end of the day Key Stage 3 students will finish Period 5 at 3.25pm. KS3 students who walk, cycle or catch buses from outside the school can leave the site at this point. Buses mustering on site will not leave school until 3.40pm which gives plenty of time for KS4 and KS5 students finishing at 3.35pm. A holding area has been set aside for KS3 students who need to wait for pickup or catch an on-site school bus. The school gates will not open until the buses have departed.

A Few Reminders

Start of Term

Tuesday 1 st September	Staff INSET
Wednesday 2 nd September	Year 7 only
Thursday 3 rd September	Year 7, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13
Friday 4 th September	Whole School

School uniform

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/about-us/uniform/>

Preloved second hand uniform from OFPA

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/parents/oaklands-friends-and-parents-association/second-hand-uniform/>

I am sure it has not passed you by that the Government has embarked on a hard sell related to the importance of students being in school in September. We have a moral responsibility to ensure this occurs. To this end, we are continuing to prepare for the return of all students to school in September as indicated in [my letter of 14th July](#). I shall write again just before the start of term with a further update.

Sorry, slightly longer than I had intended. In the meantime, continued good wishes for the rest of the summer holidays.

Best wishes



Mr M Quinn
Headteacher