

# Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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

Our Ref: MQ/SM

26 November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

It makes a change to start by writing something that is not directly related to Government advice on the pandemic.

Tomorrow, Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November, Bishop Egan has asked for a day of prayer and fasting for an end to the coronavirus pandemic. In school we have a number of families within our staff and student community who are in particular need of our prayerful support at this time and therefore we have organised a prayer marathon that will last the whole day tomorrow.

This prayer event will be available on live stream throughout the day and you can access this via our school website or by using the following link: [Oaklands Prayer Marathon](#).

Although the link will be active all day, you may wish to access at the following specific times:

9.10-10.00am	Opening Prayer and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
12.15-1.00pm	Mass with Prayers and Readings from Mass in time of pandemic
3.10-3.30pm	Closing Prayer and Reposition of the Blessed Sacrament

I'm willing to admit, right up front, that I don't fully understand prayer. There's an undeniable, unknowable, invisible mystery to the power of prayer. Despite what we may or may not understand about prayer, God has deliberately chosen this particular vehicle as the one that drives his activity in his people's lives. It is the means by which he allows us to partner with him in the fulfilling of his will.

Over this term we have been working with other Catholic Schools in the Edith Stein partnership to produce a blessing for all schools. My thanks to our Chaplain and Technical Team for running with this idea. Please follow [this link](#); it may serve as a focal point for you to start your prayer contribution tomorrow.

## Self-Isolating Timescales

The Government advice for students who have to self-isolate is that the period of isolation is for 14 days. When we have a confirmed case in school, we contact the DfE and Public Health England who advise us on when the period of isolation has to start. Understandably this can cause some confusion. For example, if we receive notification on a Sunday afternoon of a positive case from a test on the Saturday, the infectious period starts from two days before the test. Therefore, the Thursday is the first day of isolation. For asymptomatic cases the test day is the first day of isolation.

Anyone who is told to self-isolate must follow the following rules:

- do not go to work, school or public places – work from home if you can
- do not go on public transport or use taxis
- do not go out to get food and medicine – order it online or by phone, or ask someone to bring it to your home
- do not have visitors in your home, including friends and family – except for people providing essential care
- do not go out to exercise – exercise at home or in your garden, if you have one

### **Year 11 Mock Exams**

Year 11 students will be sitting their mock exams over the next three weeks; we wish them the best of luck with these. Mr Bamford is using Teams to communicate with students to remind them of seat numbers and arrangements for each day. The timetable can be found on the website -

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Y11-Mock-Timetable-2020.pdf>.

A reminder that home study for Year 11 students will be from Friday 4<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December.

### **Online Learning**

We have received lots of positive comments from parents over the efforts staff are going to as they manage a combination of teaching into the home and in school, often simultaneously. For this to be successful the students learning from home have a part to play. Our expectations in relation to how students behave in the online environment are high. Fortunately, our systems provide a detailed audit trail of who is in each online class, equally if the wrong student has subversively accessed a class. If students behave incorrectly online they will be removed from the virtual class as they would in school, a sanction will then apply when back in school. Any support parents can provide with the management of online learning is very much appreciated and welcome.

### **Parent Support**

#### Exploitation and Radicalisation – A Message from the Police

It is really important that parents and care-givers are aware of what information children are able to access online and how to spot the signs a child may be being exploited by harmful material.

Counter Terrorism Policing has launched a new safeguarding website [www.actearly.uk](http://www.actearly.uk) aimed at family and friends to encourage them to share concerns that a friend or loved one might be vulnerable to radicalisation.

Whilst support services for children remain vital, research shows that family and friends are often best placed to spot the signs that someone might be vulnerable to radicalisation. We want them to *act* early so their vulnerable friend or loved one can get the support they need before the situation escalates into something more serious.

### **Are you a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic Parent or Carer, affected by COVID-19?**

You can speak to Barnardos about your worries, problems and stresses during this time, and they can provide emotional support, practical advice and signposting to other organisations who can provide further help. [Boloh - the Black and Asian family Covid-19 Helpline | BAME Helpline \(barnardos.org.uk\)](https://www.barnardos.org.uk)

Thank you all for your support and words of encouragement this week.

Yours sincerely



Mr M Quinn  
**Headteacher**