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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

5 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

It hardly seems possible that we have now completed our second week of the Summer term. This week we have seen so many different examples of excellent work completed through remote learning. Students in Year 10 and 12 have also started to complete online open book assessments. It is important that these are completed and submitted using the Teams on-line platform.

Planning for the future.

Like many of you, I have been listening intently to Government announcements. I am keen to get students back into school as quickly as is safe to do so; we have to be guided by information from the DfE, which will form part of the national strategy to release the lockdown. Over the weekend the Government stressed the urgency of students returning back into school to prepare for exams in 2021. This suggest that Year 10 and 12 will be prioritised after Whitsun, if not before. Any return into school will have to be matched with the necessary safeguards, to ensure social distancing for staff and students can be maintained. It would be helpful for all parents to talk to their children about returning to school, particularly if you have youngsters in Year 10 and Year 12.

In the longer term, we are planning how to minimise the effects of the closure on learning for students, focusing on exam year groups first. We have plans to increase teaching hours, where possible, in the Sixth Form to help to compensate for lost learning. We may be able to tweak the school day slightly, within the hours that we currently have, in order to create opportunities for extra support in the coming months and into next academic year. We have also started to consider how we can mitigate against lost Parents' Evenings and internal exams.

Engagement Tracking

The Teams on-line platform provides staff with the vehicle to monitor when students engage with a piece of set work. The majority of students are completing remote learning tasks and submitting work. It is also evident that some youngsters are struggling to complete work, perhaps even telling parents they have completed work when this is not the case. I appreciate the difficulty some parents have tracking remote learning, particularly when balancing professional and parental responsibilities, every home situation is different. Our website has information about how to cope with remote learning and also has links to wellbeing, including organisations who can help.

Where students are struggling, we are considering the possibility of bringing these youngsters into school to provide some focused additional support. We have a large site and this should be possible to do in a safe manner with small groups. This will start with the Sixth Form and if successful, move into other years. If a student's engagement with home learning is causing concern a member of staff will shortly contact you to offer support. You can also contact your child's form tutor.

Year 9 Options

Dr Howson will shortly be writing to Year 9 students to inform them of their Option choices. How the school models the curriculum after Easter for Year 9 will largely depend on the advice and guidance we receive from the DfE. In any event, after Whitsun, Year 9 Students will drop the subjects not selected as an option at GCSE.

GCSE and A Level

The process of determining GCSE and A Level grades remains confidential. I can confirm that behind the scenes, teachers are working hard to produce the teacher assessment grades. The school has developed a robust system for assessment using various data sets. Teachers have been meeting virtually to moderate and standardise grades. We would like to reassure Year 11 and Year 13 that the school will submit to the exam boards the grades students deserve.

FREE Online Careers Information Service

Hampshire Futures has developed a webpage dedicated to careers information which can be accessed through <https://www.hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hampshirefutures/yourfuture>. This page is accessible for all, including young people, and will be updated regularly with useful and up to date information and careers resources.

Provision for Vulnerable Children and Children of Key Workers

We will continue to offer provision for vulnerable children and children of key workers up until half term, subject to any change in government strategy. I have attached to this letter separate information for this provision.

A Few Reminders

Testing for Key Workers

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested>

Prayer for the Day

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/about-us/catholic-life/daily-prayer/>

Information on Remote Learning

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Office-365-School-EmailandOneDrive.pdf>

Educational Psychologist Help for Parents

<https://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Educational-Psychologysupport-for-parents.pdf>

I do hope that we are moving in the direction where some form of normality can return. The staff and I are missing the daily interaction with students and are looking forward to getting back to the routine of school life. They all wish you well, as do I.

Best wishes, good luck with the week ahead, I will write to you all again next week.

Yours sincerely

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

Mr Matthew Quinn
Headteacher