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

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

Our Ref: MQ/SM

23 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

This week it has been a delight to begin the phased wider re-opening of the school, welcoming Year 10 and Year 12 students back into lessons for some face-to-face learning. As well as providing this important provision for Year 10 and Year 12 students, we remain committed to providing essential support to children from critical worker families. I am also delighted that we can bring Year 9 into school during the week commencing 29th June for academic mentoring. It is now possible that we might see other year groups return before the end of the year in a limited way.

Throughout this period, we are continuing to follow and adhere to the most recently published and regularly updated Government and DfE guidance in relation to wider school opening and the strict health and safety standards set by Public Health England. If it has not been announced already, I am expecting the 2m social distancing rule to be reduced to 1m with some mitigating measures; this is likely to result in another tome of guidance for schools. At 1 metre, we can increase class occupancy, however it will not be possible to have groups above approximately 20 students in a classroom.

The safety of our students, staff and school community remains our number one priority and as part of these guidelines, it is essential that only a limited number of students are in contact with each other and with members of our staff at any time.

Hot Weather

For students in school this week (Provision students and Year 10) we will relax school uniform. The forecast suggests that it will be particularly hot and students will therefore be permitted to wear their Oaklands PE kit to school. No other variation on the school's PE kit is permitted. Normal uniform will resume on Monday 29th June.

Consolidation Week

Year 7 - Year 9 should now be in the throws of consolidation week. No new work will be set. Students should be spending the time catching up. Over the course of the week, a number of extra-curricular activities have been set for students. We would like to capture some of these so please send us any photographs detailing engagement with consolidation activities.

Catch-Up Funding

Last week saw the announcement of the national catch-up programme. A number of parents have already contacted asking for detail and the school's response. This funding falls into two parts. There is £350 million for a national tutoring programme (NTP); and then there is another £650 million to be shared across state primary and secondary schools to fund their own catch-up interventions. As ever the devil is in the detail and this has yet to be published. However, I have already committed the school to fund an additional lesson in Year 13 for A level students. The starting point for additional support has to be a student's teacher as they are in the best place to assess a student's progress to date.

Leaving Date and End of Term

For all students, including those in the critical worker and vulnerable student provision, **the term will finish as originally planned on 16th July**; this leaves time for staff to plan and consider the arrangements for September. We are aware that it has been a strange time for Year 11 students, but also for Year 13; they have not been able to have their normal "rites of passage" at the end of their exams. In the circumstances it feels important to identify a finite day as the last day of school for students in these year groups. That day will be Friday 26th June. However, for students in Year 11, preparatory work has already started for courses in Year 12. We will write to Year 11 and Year 13 to confirm the arrangements for collection of calculated exam results.

We have had a number of parents ask if the Year 11 Prom will be rescheduled; it is with regret that we have made the decision that there will be no Year 11 Prom this year. We wrote to Year 11 parents on 28th April to this effect. This decision has not been taken lightly, we understand how disappointed the students must be but we cannot foresee a time when it will be safe to meet in such numbers and we do not want to book a date and have to cancel again. We hope that all students will attend the Presentation of Certificates Evening in January and we can celebrate with the year group then.

End of Term and the Beginning of the Next

We are awaiting further guidance from the Government about expectations for September and whether all year groups will be in school for part or all of the time. The Cabinet Office has said that we will not be expected to provide for key worker children during the summer holidays but has also indicated that some other broader provision is likely to be offered. We have no details about this yet but will update you as and when we hear.

On the assumption that we can bring students back into school, we would like to phase students back into school:

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

Free School Meals

Last week the government announced a £120 million Covid Summer Food Fund for children eligible for free school meals. The details so far are that the scheme will support children who are eligible for free school meals with a voucher to cover the full six week summer holiday beginning next month, which schools will be able to order before the end of term.

Vouchers will be provided via the existing system run by Edenred, which will run until the end of the summer term. Schools will be asked to put in orders for support over the summer holiday before the start of the holidays.

Guidance for schools will follow shortly. We'll bring you more information as soon as we know.

Parents' Evenings 2020-21

Parent consultation evenings are important events for child, parent and teacher; unfortunately, as a result of the lockdown a number of these were missed. It could therefore be two years between the last and next parents' evening. We are currently considering increasing the number of evenings next year or introducing a parent/tutor academic review. Before we do this, I would like your views. I would be grateful if you could complete the survey (please click on the link below). Provided a significant number of parents request an additional meeting we will make the necessary arrangements.

[Survey link](#)

Exam Season 2021

The position and nature of public exams in 2021 continues to be a concern for parents and students currently in Year 10 and Year 12. I receive more queries on this than almost anything else. From the recent Government announcement, it is likely that these will be moved to the back end of the summer term. Traditionally they have been completed by around the third week in June, I now suspect this will be the third week in July or later. Parents and students need to be mindful of this when booking holidays for the summer of 2021. I hope we will have more information on this before the end of term.

Reminders and Useful Information

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Information for Year 9 students

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

Year 9 Careers

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

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

Critical Workers

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/>

A parent has sent us the following links which may of interest to critical worker families

EE NHS and care worker unlimited mobile data allowance

<https://ee.co.uk/nhs-unlimited-data-allowance>

Vodafone NHS and care worker 6 month unlimited data allowance

<https://keepconnected.vodafone.co.uk/>

I am sure reading through another lengthy letter you get a sense of some of the uncertainty we are still having to manage in school; many of the recent Government announcements are beneficial for students and parents but often lack detail. This has been a difficult time for everyone and your patience and understanding are deeply appreciated.

Thank you for your continued support; I wish each of you the very best in dealing with the current situation.

We miss all of our students and families and look forward to the day when we can safely be under one roof again. Until that point, stay safe, and look after each other.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely



Mr M Quinn
Headteacher