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

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Our Ref: MQ/SM

9 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope you are all well.

We are looking forward to welcoming back Year 10 and Year 12 for some limited face-to-face contact. Just to reiterate again that we are completing careful planning to ensure the highest safety measures are in place for students and staff; and to manage your expectations, Government guidance has been sent to schools which suggests no more than a quarter of Year 10s and Year 12s can be in at any one time. We will not be throwing open the doors to school as normal, as it is not yet completely safe to do so.

Rumour and Speculation

It is not unusual for parents to email me in response to speculation or rumours circulating in the media. This week it was students retaking a year. First, there is no Government guidance issued which suggests any year group will be asked to retake the school year or be held back a year. What is more likely is that there will be some change to Year 11 and Year 13 exams, either in content or timing for the summer of 2021. This year we have engaged in teacher assessment so there is also a chance that this might be used as a future component. Second, the one thing we do know is that the best thing students can do for themselves is to complete the work set online by their teachers. This puts students in the best possible position for getting the best grades in August 2021, irrespective of how they are assessed. Can I remind Year 10 and Year 12 parents, carers and students that this week was the Open Book Assessment Week, so please ensure that work has been submitted to the teachers.

Year 11 and 13 Exam Grades Summer 2020

The teacher assessments have now gone to the exam boards. All exam boards will now undertake a standardisation process using national profiles and statistics. Similar to the warning on investments, grades can go up and down. It is the exam boards that award the grades, not the school. This week we have started to consider the process for issuing results in the summer, due to the social distancing requirements it will have a different 'feel' to previous years. More information will be issued shortly.

Remote Learning Survey Results – Top Learning Points

We recently undertook a survey into remote learning. There is an irony in this as we used a remote learning platform to gather the data. We know we have a number of families who have very limited access to ICT equipment; these families were significantly under-represented. However, the outcome is worth sharing with you and will help us shape remote learning as we move forward.

1. **358** students took part across Year groups 7-10 and Year 12 in roughly equal representative numbers.
2. **The vast majority of respondents** have broadband connections at home, although it is clear that a minority rely on mobile phones
3. **35%** expressed contentment with remote learning. **28%** are happy but find it hard to stay motivated. Only 2% of the sample say they do not have access to adequate resources for their remote learning to thrive.
4. Identifying what teachers are doing that is either helpful or unhelpful led to some contradictory findings. It appears we cannot please all of the students all of the time! **43%** loved the fact that their teachers are responsive and stay in touch whilst **43%** think we are setting too much work.
5. The largest percentage of students said they felt they were well-motivated and managing their time well.
6. In trying to understand learners' concerns we noted that **77%** articulated anxiety about the school closure in three distinct categories; general worry, subject specific concerns and anguish about the future, whether that be exams, impact on grade profiles for university or employment or having to re-do a year.
7. When it comes to relaxing and finding their me-time away from study, students are enjoying a range of anxieties with exercise being top-rated. **70%** of all respondents found they have no difficulty switching off from study.
8. **75%** of Oaklands students who completed this survey are looking forward to coming back to school. Their most popular reason being their friends. Seeing their friends again was the top reason in Year 7 but sank below a need for teacher input and school structure by the time we got to Years 10 and 12.

We intend to make Oaklands remote learning as effective as possible based on our student feedback. Many thanks to all who took part as well as the teachers who helped analyse the pages and pages of comments!

Consolidation Week for Key Stage 3 - 22nd June

Around the middle of this half term, KS3 students would normally experience Challenge Week. This year we are going online with Consolidation Week. During this week, no new work will be set for Year 7 to Year 9. Students can either use the week to catch up, consolidate learning, or engage in some of the activities that we will be posting online. More information will be published next week.

Year 9

Year 9 students started their GCSE lessons last week. Traditionally we hold a transition evening to support parents as their children embark on KS4. As we have been unable to hold that event this year, we have posted out an information booklet which contains useful information relating to the next two years. A copy of the booklet is available on the website along with information about Unifrog, the web-based platform we use for careers education.

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

Emergency Provision

A reminder that if you are a critical worker and 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. You are also requested to state what your critical worker role is.

As the demand for this has provision has increased it is important that you give at least one weeks' notice so that we can plan for this.

Please be aware that if staff need to isolate or we do not have the capacity to offer everyone a place, we may have to reduce the provision at short notice to priority students only.

Travel to and from School

As 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. If students wear disposable masks, they will be told where they can bin these on their arrival into school. If they wear reusable masks, they will be told how to fold and store them in their bags during the day. Masks will not be provided for this purpose by the school.

Parent Information

Think U Know have created videos to support parents during Covid-19 and the closure of schools to many children.

You can find the videos here: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/presentations-for-parents/>

I hope you all have a good week and I will write to you again next Tuesday.

Yours sincerely



Mr M Quinn
Headteacher