

# Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

Stakes Hill Road  
Waterlooville  
Hampshire  
PO7 7BW

☎ 023 9225 9214

☎ 023 9223 0317

🌐 [www.oaklandscatholicschool.org](http://www.oaklandscatholicschool.org)

✉ [oaklands@oaklandscatholicschool.org](mailto:oaklands@oaklandscatholicschool.org)



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

Our Ref: MQ/SM

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Dear Parents and Carers

We hope you are all staying safe and as well as possible at this time. The sobering news this week of the number of COVID-19 related deaths is a reminder to us all to do all we can to prevent the transmission of disease.

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, along with other faith leaders, has called on Christians to pray for the 100,000 people in Britain who have died with coronavirus, their families and communities. In a statement released on Tuesday, Cardinal Nichols described the milestone as: "A day of great sadness all over the land."

He went on to offer his prayers:

*"So many people, families, communities, remembering those who have died in these terrible months of the pandemic. Each one is mourned. Each one is to be prayed for. This is our instinct, our faith, our practice. Our prayer is rooted in the faith that, in death, life is changed, not ended, for the promise of eternal life opens the door of hope even in our darkest moments. I pray for each and every one, those who have died, those who mourn, those who serve."*

## Schools Reopening

The Prime Minister's announcement this week that schools are shut until at least Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March has come as a disappointment to all of us. However, this does provide us with a little more certainty for planning both our in-school provision and remote learning. When it does come to the reopening, this must be done in a safe and controlled manner.

## Attendance at Lessons

Many of your children continue to impress us with their attendance to lessons, which has increased since the start of term. Well done to them all. Despite this, there are some students whose attendance at lessons online is a little more 'varied'. Virtually all online lessons now have some form of face-to-face contact with the teacher. Lessons are set following the timetable. Questions at home following the theme of, 'Which lessons did you attend today?' and 'What work did you do?' may prompt the more reluctant learner to engage.

If your child is unable to attend online lessons due to illness or as a result of technological challenges, whilst internet connections are out of our control, we may be able to help with other issues.

We have noted that some students are accessing the live lessons on their phones. Whilst mobile devices are convenient to use and almost always in hand, the Teams App is more limited than when accessing live lessons on a desktop or laptop. Certain materials will not be shown in full, such as slides and other important resources.

If your son or daughter is only using their phone for convenience, we know they will not be gaining the required content from the live lesson. A mobile device is great for the Teams Chat and viewing their Teams notifications, however, it would be wise for them to use their PC for content viewing and content generation. Please let us know if you need more help about this advice.

## **Parent Survey**

Thank you to all of you who engaged in this anonymous survey. We have published the outcome of this in a separate document. Please follow [this link](#).

What is clear from this survey, is that many parents have a difference of opinion in what constitutes online learning, from every session being a university style lecture through to students working through tasks independently. In a normal classroom, no teacher talks at students for 40-50 minutes, nor should they. Online learning has to be a blend of activities. It is not a substitute for being in the classroom. We will survey parents again later in the year. Our online learning offer can be found following [this link](#), it is also published on the back of the parent survey.

## **Consolidation Day**

This is one of the actions we are taking following on from the online survey. On Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February, no new live work will be set as will be the case for Period 5 on Friday this week. This will provide youngsters who have fallen behind the opportunity to catch up.

The format for the day on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February will be as follows:

- All students need to log on at tutor time as usual on Monday morning. KS3 tutors will then arrange times to speak one-to-one with students. Priority will be given to those experiencing difficulties with attendance or engagement.
- Where there is capacity, KS4 and KS5 students will be contacted about one-to-one support sessions, these will follow the timetable.
- Students need to keep a look out for Teams Chat notifications across the day.
- Students using the in-school provision should attend school as normal on both Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January and Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February.

## **Parent Support**

Please see the link below with advice regarding domestic abuse and the new 'Ask for Ani' scheme [Domestic abuse: get help during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/coronavirus-covid-19/ask-for-ani)

Finally, another big thank you for all your support this week.

Take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely



Mr M Quinn  
**Headteacher**