

Date Sent: 4th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Further to Boris Johnson's statement this evening, I am writing to confirm that the school site will now be closed for all students except vulnerable children and the children of key workers until after February half-term. All students will now be taught remotely for the next 6 school weeks, with students hopefully returning for face-to-face teaching in school on Tuesday 23rd February 2021.

Summer Examinations and Mocks for Year 11 and 13

In light of the extended lockdown for all years, including those in years 11 and 13, it was also announced that **all GCSE and A-Level examinations will "not happen this summer as normal"** and the Education Secretary will work with the exams regulator, Ofqual, to put **"in place alternative arrangements"**. **This has also been reinforced in a DfE update to schools very late this evening** which states that:

"In these circumstances, we do not think it is possible for exams to go ahead fairly this summer. The Secretary of State for Education will be asking Ofqual to consult rapidly on an approach for alternative arrangements that will allow students to progress fairly."

We have therefore taken the decision **to cancel the year 11 mock examinations** in their present form given that they cannot be held in school until the end of February at the earliest; we believe that it is in year 11 students' best interests to continue with the planned curriculum, whilst taking the time this week to consolidate and secure key areas of knowledge. We appreciate that students will be very concerned about these developments and the lack of clarity with regard to how grades will be calculated. However, please be reassured that we will continue to teach, support and care for them and know that it is important that we are the voices of security and stability to protect our students, as best we can, from the uncertainty facing them. Until we have further information as to what the alternative arrangements involve, both year 11 and 13 students will therefore continue to be taught the syllabus for each subject they study; we will put in place internal assessments later in the year should we be required to submit a validated "mock" assessment and will ensure that students are fully prepared and given sufficient notice.

External Vocational Assessments:

Despite the messages about the summer exams, it has also just been confirmed that the **vocational exams scheduled to take place in January will go ahead as planned**. This affects post-16 students taking external exams in Health and Social Care on Friday 8th January, year 11 students taking Hospitality and Catering on Thursday 14th January and year 13 students sitting the ICT exam on Monday 18th January 2021. We will communicate with students individually so they are fully aware that these will take place

Remote Learning:

Remote learning will start tomorrow for all years and we look forward to re-connecting with our students. However, please be aware that for some teaching colleagues the lateness of this evening's announcement has left them without childcare as some primary schools have not yet set up their provision for the children of key workers. Whilst colleagues will still provide remote learning, some elements of their delivery, especially the live element, may have to be adapted over the next couple

of days as they balance teaching with caring responsibilities until provision is secured later this week. We thank you in advance for your understanding.

Timings of Breaks and Lunch

We have also taken the decision to align the break and lunch times for all year groups over the next half-term as a consideration for parents/ carers with children who have siblings at home from multiple year groups. We hope this makes it easier for supporting our students to manage their learning time and breaks from remote classes, as well as supporting parents/ carers with home supervision during breaks as/when necessary. These timings were communicated to students by email today and are as follows:

All days except Wednesday:

- Break-10:20am to 10:40am
- Lunch-12.45pm to 1.25pm

Wednesday:

- Break-10:40am to 11am
- Lunch- 1:05 to 1:45

The adjusted school day timings during remote learning for **all year groups**, therefore, are as follows:

Time	Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays	Wednesdays
8:30	Tutor time and registration	Tutor time, registration + PBT 8:30- 9:00
8:40-9:30	Period 1	9-9:50
9:30-10:20	Period 2	9:50-10:40
10:20-10:40	BREAK	10:40-11:00
10:40-11:30	Period 3	11:00-11:50
11:30-12:45	Period 4	11:50-1:05
12:45-1:25	LUNCH	1:05- 1:45
1:25- 2:10	Period 5	1:45-2:35
2:10-3:05	Period 6	No period 6

I apologise for the late email and thank you once again for your continued support.

Kind regards,

Carly Purnell

Headteacher

