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Headteacher: Mr J Parr BA Hons

3rd April 2020

Dear Parents & Carers,

As we reach what would usually have been the end of term, after 6 weeks of lessons, learning, GCSE exam preparation and extra-curricular activities, I am writing to you instead, after two weeks of unprecedented change in all of our lives.

In such challenging times, we have rapidly pulled together as a nation to support each other, with the school community being no exception. We have responded to the rapidly changing directives and recommendations, at all times keeping the safety and support for your child/ren, at the heart of decision making. Thank you, therefore, for the overwhelming messages of support and encouragement that you have taken the time to send to us. We may not have replied, but please rest assured that your kind words have bolstered our efforts.

We recognise that your child/ren will have had to adapt to the changes we have made in the work being provided. Thank you students (and parents/carers!) for sticking with us. We have never had to prepare for such an event as we are encountering, therefore we are trying very hard to get it as right as possible. Professional bodies have made it very clear that it is not possible to replicate the usual school experience at home and that it is not reasonable, or feasible for schools to provide a 'normal' school education during this time. Not only are resources limited to achieve this, but we are mindful of the different circumstances of pupils at home. The guidance helps us to work within a framework whereby we are working hard to ensure students receive learning opportunities (but not lessons as would happen in school). Marking of work is not possible or expected of teachers at this time, but keeping in touch messages take place, along with some adapted use of technology to gauge student knowledge, where appropriate, such as a Microsoft Forms multiple choice quizzes.

I am sure that you would like to join me, therefore, as I express sincere thanks to all staff, teaching and non-teaching, for their utmost dedication to doing their very best for students. They are certainly going above and beyond the normal expectations of their work and I am so fortunate to have such a fabulous staff, supporting the collective effort we are making to meet the demands of our re-purposed school and way of working. Thank you!

For Year 11 students, we have now received information from Ofqual regarding how grades are to be awarded. This information is freely available to everyone, however, Dr Wood, Deputy Headteacher will write to parents & carers of Year 11 to provide an overview, with links to key information and a letter from Ofqual. Please bear with us as we also digest the information and please do not contact subject teachers, as it would be highly inappropriate for them to be asked to discuss grades for individuals.

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So we reach the Easter break, during which time there will not be any learning activities set for students through Go4Schools, as would be the norm for the Easter holiday. We are aware that the BBC are seeking to provide online and television learning in the near future, which we hope will provide additional resources to help your child/ren further. We will return to remote learning on Monday 20th April.

I am sure that like me, you are all altering what you might normally have done or plans previously made, as we continue to support the government's directive to 'stay at home', unless in exceptional circumstances, to save lives. Thank you for supporting this and we wish you a safe Easter at home with your family.

With best wishes

John Parr
Headteacher