



25th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: National Lockdown Week 3 Update

Firstly, I must ask that you continue to pray for the member of our Year 11 who remains in a critical condition. We pray for a speedy recovery and continue to pray for his family and friends at this difficult time.

If you are anything like me, you will have been following the news closely this weekend and will have seen the headline in the Times which reports that schools could stay closed until May and that year groups could return in a staggered way and on a rota basis. Ultimately, we need to wait and see what is officially announced over the coming weeks by the Government. Schools have been told they will be given two weeks' notice before they are expected to return. As soon as any information comes to light, I will of course write to update you.

We are now two weeks into our remote learning, and I would ask for your support as parents in ensuring that your child arrives on time for their lessons **including Form time at 8.45am**. Form time not only provides an opportunity for key notices to be passed on, for students to join together in prayer and liturgy but also for Form Tutors to check in on our students from a wellbeing point of view. All codes for Form time are on Show My Homework and if your child is having any difficulty accessing Form time please do email their Form Tutor.

On Thursday this week we have our virtual Year 11 Parents' Evening. Our Year 11 students have been making appointments with their subject teachers last week during their Zoom lessons. If your child is yet to make an appointment, please ensure they do before Thursday with the relevant teachers or please make contact with the teacher directly. Another reminder for Year 11 parents in particular is the current Department for Education (DFE) and Ofqual consultation which can be found at the link below <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021>. The consultation closes at 11.45pm on 29th January. Please can I stress that, at Parents' Evening, our staff will not be able to answer questions such as what grade will my child be given for their centre assessed grade or will there be any exams for my child to sit. We just do not know what the outcome of the national consultation will be at this stage. Again, when any firm outcomes are shared by the DFE or Ofqual I will write to you.

Our Year 9 options process has begun with the curriculum brochures sent home at the start of January and our Year 9 Parents' Evening taking place on 14th January. Please ensure that you have read the curriculum brochure. There will shortly be a letter from Dr Guscott which will explain further details of the options process, including how to make appointments with Heads of Subject with whom you may wish to discuss your child's suitability for a particular subject at Key Stage 4.

Our lateral flow testing began on site last week for those with consent amongst our vulnerable children or children of Critical Workers who have been attending school. Our staff testing using lateral flow tests has also commenced. I am pleased to say, so far, that all tests have come back as negative. You may have seen the press headlines last week which have said that testing has paused in schools, just to confirm this is only where children/staff have been identified as a close contact. Initial testing of children with consent and regular testing of staff continues as normal.



ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Finally, the Gospel yesterday spoke of Jesus meeting Simon and Andrew who were out fishing, and he called them to be his followers. They did. They were humble men, fishermen by trade and we are reminded that anyone can be a disciple. Today we are not only called, but we are also sent out to proclaim the Gospel through how we live our lives, in what we say and do. In these uncertain and troubling times, as we all continue to live with some form of restrictions and social distancing measures, our means of reaching out to others may not be as easy, but we must all do our best, as this is needed now more than ever. Our staff will always continue to do their very best for your children even in these challenging circumstances.

Thank you as always for your continued support, I hope you have a fantastic week, if you need us you know where we are. Please do not hesitate to contact me at headteacherpa@stjamesheadle.co.uk

Yours faithfully

Mr A Pontifex

Headteacher