



8<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

**Re: National Lockdown Week 5 Update**

There are three things I would like to do with this letter; update you on what we know so far regarding the examinations consultation which closed on 29<sup>th</sup> January, remind you of several key dates and finally share some good news which I feel we all need right now. However, can I begin by reminding you to keep our Year 11 student, who remains in a critical condition, in your thoughts and prayers.

The examinations consultation closed on 29<sup>th</sup> January and the Department for Education have said that firm plans for grading GCSEs will be published "by the end of February". This now means our teachers and our students have a wait of up to four weeks to be given details of how qualifications will be awarded this year. Therefore, it is absolutely imperative that we continue as if the examinations were going ahead. Our Year 11 curriculum will proceed as normal, as per our curriculum progression grids which are available here <http://www.stjamesheadle.co.uk/curriculum/>, with interleaving and regular assessment including mock examinations. More information surrounding our second round of mock examinations will be sent in the immediate future.

St James' will close for the end of Spring half term one this Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February and re-open to those vulnerable children and the children of critical workers on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February. No homework will be set for Key Stage 3 (Year 7, 8 and 9) but may be set for Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11). I would also like to remind you that our school choir continues each Tuesday for all Year groups at 1.15pm over Zoom. If you would like any further information, please do contact Mr Boyd.

As we look for any form of good news at the moment, one of the best parts of my job is seeing the fantastic work that our young people produce. This has clearly been difficult during this lockdown period. However, this week I asked staff to send me examples of work which really demonstrate our third value of excellence and I was completely amazed; Lucy (7A) carried out an experiment with her little sister using red cabbage indicator as part of her Science curriculum, Imogen (8C) spent a lot of time carrying out some excellent research on the Easter Vigil and presented it beautifully for RE, Dylan (7C) wrote a fantastic poem as part of his English end of term assessment on an autumnal scene. The standard of Art work produced at St James' is astounding; Emma (10J) shared her homework on Exploration and Connection showing a Chanel No. 5 perfume bottle holding a series of flowers whilst Oliwia (11C) showcased her ability with both pencil and acrylic work. Finally, George (11E) won our first English competition on creative writing last week, the story involved an MI6 operative and had me hooked, we look forward to chapter 2!

In the Gospel yesterday, St Mark highlights the importance of prayer in Jesus' daily life. We are told that Jesus rose early in the morning, removed himself from the crowds, and went to a deserted place to pray. Jesus' example is an important lesson for us all. In prayer, Jesus found guidance and direction from God. Let us pray for guidance and direction as we finish our final week of half term and move towards Easter.

Thank you so much for your continued support especially throughout this half term. Have a fantastic week and a restful break. Again, if you need anything please get in touch at [headteacherpa@stjamesheadle.co.uk](mailto:headteacherpa@stjamesheadle.co.uk)



# ST JAMES'

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Yours faithfully

Mr A Pontifex  
Headteacher