



12/6/20

Dear Parent or Carer,

I hope this finds you well. It's been an exceptionally busy week here as the College gears up to welcome back Y10 and Y12 students, albeit on a part-time basis, from next Monday.

If you have a daughter or son in either or both of these year groups, you will have received details from myself or Amy Withers with arrangements for these year groups.

For all parents and carers, I thought it would be useful just to reflect on what is happening across the College at this point in time.

This Term so far...

Although the College has been officially closed to students since 23 March as with all schools in England, we have continued to have keyworker and vulnerable students on site every day of term, and throughout the Easter holidays. We also have a specialist provision for our SEND students running daily supported by our teaching assistant team.

We've continued pastoral support to our most needy young people. Teachers have continued to set learning and give feedback remotely via our distance learning programme. They have also discussed, deliberated and assessed grades for Y11s and Y13s who have not sat their exams this year. Over 5500 grades have been submitted to exam boards in the past week, and each one of these has been discussed and checked individually.

Our admin team has continued to work remotely answering phones and email queries. Our site team and cleaners have been working every day making sure everything is ready for when we are able to have more students with us.

All of this is being done whilst the College remains largely empty of students, which is so strange for all of us. A visitor remarked to me this week that it must be nice and quiet not to have students around; far from it - we really miss the energy and buzz they bring! I'm sure many students and staff alike are growing tired of online meetings and missing the spontaneous interactions that are part and parcel of school life.

Thank you again for your feedback around distance learning. We had a great student council meeting today on the same subject with students. I know many parents and carers are keen to see more frequent live lessons online, and we are confident this will continue to develop. Following feedback we are looking at a new simplified schedule of google meets that will sit alongside the teaching commitments staff have on site, and also enable students to access meets across all subjects on a weekly basis. We look forward to sharing details of this with you next week.

On a lighter note, a lockdown assembly has been released to all students via ClassCharts (it appears as a homework set by me), although the more students that view it, the more it may add to my embarrassment...

The New School Year from September...

Many parents and carers have asked me about plans for September and have expressed worries about what the school year will look like going forward. Will students be able to catch up? Will schools be back full-time? Will distance learning continue alongside part-time reopening? What will happen to exams next year? How will we support young people who have suffered during the lockdown?

The reality is that, as I write, we have no clear indication on these matters. As teachers, we spend most of our lives planning in detail and then adapting these plans to the needs and reactions of students. So it is especially frustrating not to be able to begin planning in detail for September at this stage. The government have announced they will be releasing national plans around summer holiday catch up next week, but schools as yet have no indication of what this may be. The exams regulator OFQUAL has said it would like schools to have details of any adjustments to next year's exams by the time the holidays begin, but this is not guaranteed. As soon as we have information, we will of course share it with parents and carers.

Having said this, it is a privilege to witness how adaptable and determined both students, families and staff have been to the many changes the past months have brought. This gives me great confidence that we can meet whatever challenges are to come.

As ever, please do contact me if you have any questions, queries or feedback at:

asalt@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk

With best wishes,



Alan Salt
Principal