



Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Following on from Boris Johnson's announcement last night of a 3<sup>rd</sup> National Lockdown, I felt it appropriate for me to write to you with an update.

### **School Closed**

Firstly, as you are probably no doubt aware by now, St John's is now closed to all students apart from our vulnerable pupils and children of Key Workers and, as a result, we have now moved to remote learning for all of our pupils. The Prime Minister announced that this will be the case until at least the February Half Term; I sincerely hope that we are in a position to welcome students back to school as soon as it is safely possible to do so.

### **January/February BTEC Examinations**

A number of KS4 and KS5 students were scheduled to take BTEC examinations during Term 3. These students have been contacted today about this process and the options now available to them. If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact your respective subject teacher or Mrs Prior, our Examinations Officer: [dprior372@stj.kent.sch.uk](mailto:dprior372@stj.kent.sch.uk).

### **Remote Learning**

With regards to our remote learning provision, work is currently being set on Show My Homework to mirror each student's daily timetable wherever possible, and staff have already started to set up and deliver MS Teams lessons with some of their groups as part of a pilot programme. Whilst this takes a little bit of time to set up for all classes and your patience is very much appreciated, we are hoping to be in a position where all students will have their Show My Homework tasks complimented by 'live' MS Teams lessons as soon as possible. More details on this will be shared with you in due course.

### **Home/School Support**

I am well aware that it is not always easy for students to access or engage with home learning and that it can often prove to be a real challenge for pupils, parents as well as staff. However, we are here to help: if you or your child encounter any problems at all, please do not hesitate to contact your respective Pastoral team in the first instance and we will do our utmost to resolve the matter.

### **Summer Examinations**

Included in the Prime Minister's announcement last night, was the news that summer examinations would be cancelled/changed from their current format. I fully appreciate just how anxious our examination-year students will be on hearing this news, especially after the problems that arose last year. Fortunately, we still have a lot of time between now and the summer and one would hope that the government and Ofqual will be able to use this time to work with schools to come up with the fairest solution whereby students are awarded the grades that they so rightly deserve in their forthcoming external examinations. I can assure you all that St John's will be doing everything we can to support pupils throughout these next 6 months and we will update you on the way forward just as soon as the exam boards and the Department for Education have released their plans for the summer.

Excellence for All

Service to Others

Inspired by Christ



## Mock Examination Results

Before Christmas we held back on releasing mock examination results to KS4 and KS5 students due to the number of pupil absences at the time; it was very much our intention to give these results out to pupils face to face in order to maximise the benefits of this process both motivationally and supportively. Unfortunately, it is clear that this will not now be possible and I am sure that students are very eager to receive their mock results. Therefore, we will be issuing these results to our KS4 & KS5 students as quickly as possible.

## Covid Mass Testing Programme

In my last letter to you on the 31<sup>st</sup> December, I asked for volunteers to support with the government's strategy of developing Covid Mass Testing Programmes in schools, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank those parents who generously got in touch with the school in order to offer their support; we had an amazing response and I really am most grateful. Following yesterday's announcement this programme has been put on hold, however, it may well be that I will call upon your support with this later on in the year.

Finally, throughout all of these turbulent times, I would like to thank you all for the understanding and support that you have shown us all here at St John's, especially when you have all got your own personal challenges to deal with as a result of the pandemic. We will continue to do everything we can to help you and your child(ren) over these next few weeks and let us all hope and pray that, through the vaccine roll out and society's adherence to the new guidance, that this school closure will be as brief as possible so that we can very quickly welcome students back to school where they belong.

Very best wishes and God bless

Matt Barron  
Headteacher