

ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

A Voluntary Academy



25 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carers,

I hope this finds you well. The word to use at the minute is adaptability. We have all found a new way of teaching and learning that we never thought was possible. Our students are doing a fantastic job learning and engaging remotely and with attendance at lessons being incredibly high, our teachers are feeling very rewarded for all their hard work. We will be sending out lots of emails, certificates and postcards over the next few weeks to acknowledge all the successes we are seeing. Well done in advance if your child receives one of these. If you wish to thank a particular member of staff or group of staff for something they have done, please email me directly on sconaghan@st-pauls.leicester.sch.uk. It is important to me that our staff get praise too, it is after all a great motivator and they deserve it.

We have loaned out a significant number of laptops to assist students with their live lessons; if you have laptop issues which are preventing your child from attending all their lessons, please email Miss Warrilow on swarrilow@st-pauls.leicester.sch.uk, we may be able to help. Can I also ask that if your child is ill that you follow the usual school procedures and call the absence line. This also includes students who have been coming into school. Your child will then be coded on the register so his/her teachers can see they will not be in lessons.

We have had to be adaptable in many other ways this week after recent announcements about the Lateral Flow testing programme. Students in school have been tested and staff are also tested weekly. We are now told that the student contact testing has been paused. We are not clear yet what the testing situation will be when all students return to school. This possible return to school will be on many of your minds I am sure. Gavin Williamson was clear when he spoke last week that the return to school was a priority but a number of conditions would need to be met. These included the pressure on the NHS needed to ease and the need for a new variant to not be identified. There is no date yet for schools to re-open; Mr Williamson is due to make an announcement this week. I hope the current remote learning is a good alternative until we hear more.

Similarly, with regards to the Teacher Assessments which will replace the GCSE and A Level examinations. The proposals for these including what evidence teachers can use to decide a grade, are currently being consulted on with the DfE and Ofqual. The consultation ends this week so we would expect to hear something in February. If you have a child in Year 11 or 13 please encourage them to continue attending lessons and completing all work.

It is School Assessment Week 1-5th February for Years 11 and 13. We have asked staff for both these year groups to use both the assessment completed this week along with other tests and assessments completed last term to decide on the actual predicted grade. These grades will be put on to PS16 for Year 11. Grades for both year groups will be on G4S by Monday 22nd February. All other year groups will have an assessment at some point this half term. Learning Journeys and grades can be viewed on G4S.

Parents with No Recourse to Public Funds NRPF applies when a person is 'subject to immigration control'. A person who is subject to immigration control cannot claim public funds (benefits and housing assistance), unless an exception applies. Parents and carers themselves need to inform the school that they have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). There has been a temporary extension during the coronavirus crisis to allow for some children of families with NRPF to claim free school meals. If you become aware that parents or carers have no recourse to public funds, they can complete the form found by clicking here. If you need help with this please contact us. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-schoolmeals-guidance>

St Thomas Aquinas, our Trust namesake was an Italian Dominican friar, Catholic priest and Doctor of the Church. He is an immensely influential philosopher and theologian whose Feast Day is 28th January. Sadly, the St Thomas Aquinas Feast Day activities planned for 28th January in school will no longer go ahead. However, students will be sent a short video liturgy that can be watched as a family this week. It seems fitting to sign off with one of St Thomas' many quotes:

"God himself would not permit evil in this world if good did not come of it for the benefit and harmony of the universe."

We hope that much good has and will come out of what we are all currently living through.

Important dates:

Thursday 28th January - Year 8 Parents Evening

Thursday 28th January St Thomas Aquinas Feast Day

Friday 29th January - Inset Day. School is closed to all students and there will no lessons or work set

Monday 1st February - Friday 5th February - Assessment Week for Years 11 and 13

Thursday 4th February - Year 12 and 13 Parents Evening

Friday 12th February 2.50pm - School breaks up for half term

Monday 22nd February - School re-opens tbc

Best wishes,



Mrs S Conaghan
Principal