

All Hallows Catholic College

A Voluntary Academy | National Teaching School

Aspire not to have more but to be more

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Principal - Mr T Beesley

12th February 2021

Dear Parent or Carer,

RE: COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) – UPDATED INFORMATION AND ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS OF YEAR 11 & 13 STUDENTS

I hope you and your families are well. As you may be aware, the DfE and Ofqual's joint consultation on how GCSE and A level grades should be awarded in summer 2021, closed on the 29th January. As soon we know the process for calculating exam grades for A-Level, BTEC and GCSE we will pass this on to you. We don't, however, expect to hear the outcome of the consultation until after half-term, but in the meantime, my message to all Year 11 & 13 students remains the same - we will continue to do everything we can to ensure that their hard work and efforts are recognised and rewarded, and that they need to stay positive, and to continue to engage with their online learning. We have been really impressed with their engagement with remote learning so far, and I would like to thank parents and carers for your support with this.

As promised in last week's newsletter, despite the lack of clarity regarding the full reopening of College and the awarding of grades, I wanted to write to you before half-term, with information about Mock Exams & Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening.

Year 11 Mock Exams

The Year 11 Mocks were scheduled to take place in the fortnight beginning 11th January. The national lockdown, cancellation of GCSE exams and the partial closure of College meant that these had to be postponed. As we await the outcome of the DfE / Ofqual consultation, we need to consider, carefully how to proceed with our postponed Mock examinations. Whilst any school led formal assessment will not be the only information that goes towards the awarding of grades in the summer, they will provide us with additional, useful data, that should be able to be used as part of the process.

In terms of timings, we are hoping that College will fully reopen again, from the 8th March, and this may very well be a 'staggered return', for students in exam year groups, as well as those vulnerable children and children of critical workers who are already attending College in person. There is still an expectation, however, that all students returning to schools and colleges, who have consent, should be tested twice for COVID-19, with a three-day gap between each test. This will be a logistical challenge for large schools like ours, and whilst we are confident that we can successfully complete the testing of all students, and continuing to test all staff, twice per week, we need to factor this into our planning. We also don't want to bring our young people back into College, after a significant time of remote learning, straight into a period



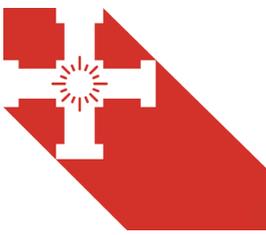
Honourable Purpose

Respect

Compassion

Co-operation

Stewardship



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of formal assessments – this would be unfair and potentially detrimental on the mental health and wellbeing of some of our youngsters. We are, therefore, provisionally planning on holding the Year 11 Mock Exams towards the end of next half-term, possibly either side of the Easter holidays. I must stress that this is our current thinking, and I am sure that you understand that these plans may very well change, when more information becomes available.

Year 13 Mock Exams

Year 13 students sat their first set of Mocks in September / October, and they were due to take their second set of exams in the week beginning 8th March – when we think College might reopen fully, again. For the reasons outline above, however, we don't want to re-schedule these exams too early, following students returning to College, so we are thinking of holding them at the same time as the Year 11 Mocks, towards the end of the term, possibly staggering the Easter holidays.

Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening

Year 11 Parent Consultation Evening is due to be held on Thursday 4th March, and that is still our plan. Due to all of the uncertainty over the awarding of GCSE & BTEC grades, however, teachers will not be able to give any indication of current predicted grades. They will be able to refer back to the last progress report in November, and they will be able to discuss engagement during this period of partial College closure, as well as what they think your child needs to do over this coming weeks to make further progress, but teachers are not in a position to comment on what grades they think a particular student may or may not achieve in the Summer. Information about the Parent Consultation Evening, to be held remotely on School Cloud, has been sent out separately.

Mental Health & Well-being

We are very aware of the fact that some of our students may be struggling during this period of partial closure, just like some of them did during the first national lockdown. The College website has lots of really useful links and information, and they can be accessed [here](#). If you do have any concerns about your child, though, and would like to talk to someone, please get in touch. Your child's Form Tutor is your first port of call, but you can also contact their Year Learning Leader or member of the Pastoral Team. Contact details can be found on the College website, [here](#).

Thank you for your continued patience and support, and I am sorry that we don't have more detailed information for you at this point. As always, if you do have questions about any of the issues above, please feel free to email my PA, Mrs Metheringham, at principalpa@allhallows.org.uk.

God Bless

Tim Beesley



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