



Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope my Email letter finds you and your family well.

I wanted to contact you all and thank you for your messages of support to the staff at this challenging time. I have been reminded of a quote by Lenin that is so apt at the moment and hopefully not yet overused. *There are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen.* For our community that has certainly been the case. In school we are all working differently and in a way that is alien to our nature - keeping our distance from students and colleagues in a way that might normally be seen as cold and uncaring but is currently the exact opposite. In our virtual school, off site, we are in communication but not really in contact.

We have asked staff and students to work together in quite different ways. You will all have close hand experience of Google Classroom. The wonder of it! I hope it is a helpful intrusion into your home in terms of keeping going your daughter's education. Compared to many schools it seems to be an ideal compromise. However I am aware for families with more than one student in the home and the need for several devices in order to access learning, perhaps in competition with Mum and or Dad or other family members working from home, perhaps with a family member unwell, it will not always go smoothly.

Please be assured that it is alright for students to work at a pace that fits the needs of your family, as situations unfold. Students have been engaging with their classrooms and so far everything seems to be going as well as should be expected. Staff expertise with the facilities available through Google Classroom is rapidly developing. Teachers are good learners!

Ofqual has made an announcement today about expectations for schools around producing grades for Year 11 and 13 students entered for GCSE and A Level summer examinations. We are still waiting for information regarding BTEC Qualifications. The school will be writing to Parents and Carers of Year 11 and 13 with the information from the announcement and the school's response in terms of regulations and ethical leadership, to arrive at appropriate grades for their daughters, at the start of next term. Rest assured we are a consistently high achieving school with a wealth of data from which to draw upon, both for current students and past trends. Ofqual say there will be an opportunity for students to take written assessments in the autumn term. This might be helpful for students who wish to achieve a grade higher than they may eventually be predicted by school. The deadline for schools to issue grades is towards the end of May. Students still have the opportunity to produce work that can be taken into consideration. For that reason it may be important for our students in Years 11 and 13 to keep up their learning and revision throughout the holiday period and the first half of next term. They have nothing to lose and potentially something to gain. I would ask Parents and Carers of those year groups to please not contact individual staff members regarding grades. They will only be able to give you a standard response which is *The school will contact you shortly about this.*

Finally I feel I ought to share with you that students and staff within our community have sadly experienced loss since the whole school closure. It is a private time for everyone concerned but I know all the staff join with me in sending our families who have experienced such loss, their sincere condolences and heartfelt support at this difficult time.

I would also like to thank the Board Members and Board Trustees for the support they have continued to provide to the school throughout this period of uncertainty. On behalf of the Full Governing Body and the whole staff I would like to wish you all happy holidays, Happy Easter, Happy Pesach, Happy Orthodox Easter at the end of our school holiday and Ramadan Mubarak which begins soon after next term commences. New beginnings celebrated in different ways with many similarities across our diverse community at this time of year; a message of hope for us all.

Stay safe and keep well. With all good wishes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Violet Walker". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter 'V' being particularly large and stylized.

Violet Walker  
Headteacher