



Our Lady's Catholic High School



A National Teaching School

Friday, 27 March 2020

School is Closed

Dear Parents and Carers

I write to you from my office on Friday morning, 27 March on a beautiful spring morning. Sadly we, along with all other schools in the country are closed and this situation is likely to remain for many weeks yet.

I was deeply moved by the support that was shown last night at 8.00pm to all of the wonderful members of the NHS and Social Care who are working continuously to help all of the people who have been afflicted by the COVID 19 virus. My son is an NHS worker too in Manchester and we stood outside our house and applauded all of the workforce along with countless others. Let us hope that, once all of this is over, the government remembers what these people and others have done to keep us all safe and ensure that we invest fully and properly in these services in the future. When things go wrong, we realise just how much we need each other; something that can be easily forgotten when things are running normally.

Work has of course been set through Google Classrooms and teachers are communicating with their classes via such platforms. It is very clear that a huge amount of work is being completed and I commend pupils and their families for showing this important resilience in challenging times. Children must be kept occupied and this is an opportunity for all of us to reflect on how we function as a family and to really try to find new ways of working; of connecting with others; of sharing time together and being kind to each other.

To our Year 11 pupils, we are still waiting for clear direction from the Department for Education regarding how GCSE grades will be awarded. This is a time of great anxiety, but the government has stated clearly that the grades for 2020 will be inseparable from 2019. What we await is the process by which this will be achieved. We are told that this will be made clear next week. It is a complex process that must be fair, and it is understandable that it is taking some time to design. Please be assured that as soon as I hear the details of the process, I will share this with all of you.

I am sure that you understand that the school staff who are in school each day to allow parents who are Key Workers to attend their place of work are taking a clear risk with their own health and that of their families at home. They are understandably nervous and anxious too and appreciate your thoughts and prayers greatly. They also realise that there is a social duty on us all to do our best at a time of national emergency. However it is essential that we keep the numbers of children in school to an absolute minimum to allow Social Distancing to operate correctly and reduce the chance of the virus spreading.

With my prayers and very best wishes to you all

The new circle of control

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