

27th January 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Re: COVID-19 Lockdown Update

I hope you are all well and managed to have some fun in the snow on Sunday and yesterday! It has been quite an eventful couple of weeks in education, so I am writing to keep you abreast of everything you need to know.

Exam consultation survey

Ofqual recently released the consultation document for schools, parents and students to hear their views on proposals for awarding qualifications this summer.

Having read through the detailed document found at the following web address, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/953000/6743-1 GCSE AS and A level grades should be awarded in summer 2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/953000/6743-1_GCSE_AS_and_A_level_grades_should_be_awarded_in_summer_2021.pdf)

it is clear that Ofqual's thinking would put our students at further disadvantage should it become a reality. I have published a copy of our official school response to this consultation on the school's website (*under Covid-19 updates -> Letters home*) and would urge all our stakeholders to complete this survey as every entry is considered and makes a difference.

The link to the survey is shown below

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/8BY14T/>

I am sure that every one of our Year 11 students would value your input into the consultation and using our official school's response available via the link below will help speed up any responses.

<https://www.phoenixcollegiate.org/site/data/files/documents/letters/F9B31574D725CBE899C16B2F1C95DA87.pdf>

Reopening of school to all students possibly delayed

A number of newspapers reported at the weekend that it is likely schools will not reopen until Easter and claims that Gavin Williamson, Education Secretary will be making an announcement at some point this week to confirm this. At the time of writing this letter, I understand that the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, has been asked to confirm a date or a plan on how schools will reopen but he has not given an indication of what this will look like yet.

For now, as a school, we will continue to focus on our remote learning provision and continue to develop what we are doing. If remote learning is to continue beyond February half term, we want to make sure that we are doing everything we possibly can for our students to make their learning experience the best it can be whilst we are working online.

Your views are very important so we will be sending a remote learning survey out soon (details below).

Remote Learning Survey

We have received an overwhelming number of positive comments from families about our remote learning provision which we are very grateful for and I would like to thank everybody who has taken the time to share their kind thoughts – each time we receive positive comments it gives us such a boost!

As mentioned above, it seems that we will be continuing with remote learning for a while yet so as we are halfway through the first half term and after speaking to lots of families, students and staff, we have decided that it would be a good time to review our experiences over the last 3 weeks.

A survey will be sent out in the next few days for students, parents/carers and staff to complete as we would like to gain an overview of what each of our stakeholders think of our provision so far and what we can do to improve it further.

We particularly want to focus on mental health and wellbeing and the screen time both students and staff are finding themselves using each day.

We would really appreciate it if as many students and families could complete it and thank you in advance for doing so!

Mass Testing at School

In my previous communications we were beginning to work on the logistical problem of mass testing almost 2300 people. However, the government has paused a part of the testing programme.

The government would still like schools to carry out routine testing of students and staff (if consent is given) and I thank the large number of families that have completed the survey so far (880 responses to date). It is important that we have this information before we return to school so I would urge all parents/carers to complete this consent (a link can be found on our school's website front page). It will keep us all safer.

I hope the burden of home schooling your children is not too difficult for you, having two children at home myself and trying to manage them and work, when at home is certainly a challenge that I am remembering from lockdown one.

Best wishes and stay safe,



Mike Smith
Head teacher