



# Parent Newsletter

St Mary Magdalene Secondary

Issue No 11 | January | Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent/Carers,

I write to you on the eve of a third national lockdown. Yesterday, the Prime Minister made a statement to the nation, in which he confirmed that with effect from 5<sup>th</sup> January:

- Secondary schools will be closed until at least the February half term
- Secondary schools will remain open for children of critical workers
- The government will be working with Ofqual to consult rapidly on putting in place alternative arrangements to public examinations in 2021.

Following this guidance, please ensure your child is logging on to Satchel every morning to begin completing their work. Your child will have access to up to five online lessons per day, in line with their usual school timetable. We have further improved our offer by ensuring each lesson has a recorded video from their teacher, for instance via 'Loom'. We expect students to watch all presentations created by their teachers and then complete the attached work.

Since yesterday, we as a school have made over 900 phone calls to all of our students. I thank our family group tutors for taking time to do this and for the time it will take in the future as this is a commitment we are making as a school. If you have received a voicemail, please ensure you call the school back requesting a convenient time to receive a call. There were some numbers which were incorrect; if you know you have a new mobile number, please contact the school as soon as possible.

## Reports

Your child's Autumn reports will be sent to you later this week by email; Year 11 will also receive a separate mock examinations report, displaying the grade achieved in their December mock exams. Year 10 reports will follow later in the term. When you receive your report, you will also receive a letter from Mr Greenwood explaining some of the key features of the report.

## Year 11 examinations and assessments

Among the Prime Minister's announcements was that there will be some changes to GCSEs and A-Levels this summer. We are as yet unclear what this will involve – it may be that exams will continue in some subjects, that students will be required to complete assessments from home, or that students' books will be used as evidence of their grades. As such, all students must continue to complete their work on Satchel, assuming that they may be tested on it or that the work produced now will be used to give them a GCSE grade.

Vocational assessments (for instance BTEC examinations) are currently scheduled to continue. We will be in contact with regards to any such assessments and your child must attend school to complete these assessments.

### **Year 9 parents' evening and GCSE options process**

The Year 9 parents' evening will take place virtually on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January from 1.00-4.30pm and not the 14<sup>th</sup> January as previously advertised. Please note that as a result of school closure, virtual meetings will take place with family group tutors only; details of how to access the virtual parents' evening will be sent in due course.

The GCSE options process would now be reaching its conclusion, with options forms due on 19<sup>th</sup> January. GCSE options will instead now be completed via an online portal; Mr Greenwood will send more information next week.

### **Sixth Form**

A reminder that the deadline for applications to the Sixth Form for internal students is Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Applications can be accessed via our Sixth Form website. If students and or parents are having any difficulties completing the application please email: [sixthformadmissions@koinoniafederation.com](mailto:sixthformadmissions@koinoniafederation.com).

### **Lockdown restrictions**

A reminder of what Lockdown means: Individuals must not leave home unless they have a reasonable excuse (for example, for work or education purposes). The Government advises that if you need to travel you should stay local and reduce the number of journeys you make overall. The list of reasons you can leave your home and area include, but are not limited to:

- work – where you cannot reasonably work from home;
- accessing education and for caring responsibilities;
- visiting those in your support bubble – or your childcare bubble for childcare;
- visiting hospital, GP and other medical appointments or visits where you have had an accident or are concerned about your health;
- buying goods or services that you need, but this should be within your local area wherever possible;
- outdoor exercise. This should be done locally wherever possible, but you can travel a short distance within your area if necessary (for example, to access an open space);
- attending to the care and exercise of an animal, or accessing veterinary services.

Car sharing with anyone from outside your household or your support bubble should be avoided. Full school closure is something we have all desperately wanted to avoid, but with the current situation, I believe the correct decision has been made. Over the next few weeks, our staff will be working extremely hard to ensure we provide the best remote learning offer we possibly can – we will need your full support if we are to be successful.

Sincerely

Mr R Hussain  
**Principal**