



3rd April 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

Easter “Newsletter” Update

Normally at this time of year I am writing to you about the approaching exams for Year 10, 11 and 13, the need for revision and the events of the last term. Obviously, this is not a normal time but I did want to ensure that our school community stays connected one way or another.

I've broken down some of the key information for you:

- The High School has now become a hub for the children of key workers for a very small number of children from our school, Perton Middle School, Bilbrook CE Middle School and Lane Green First School. It was inefficient to run four separate sites when the numbers were so low. This will be how we continue to work in the coming weeks until we get back to some semblance of normality.
- The school will remain open during the Easter holidays for the children of key workers.
- We are also being used as a food distribution hub for South Staffordshire as a way of ensuring that the elderly, vulnerable or self-isolating have sufficient food supplies.
- We have all been adjusting to new ways of working. I know work has been set through the school app and there has been plenty of communication between staff and students. Whilst we were, relatively, well prepared for the move to online learning we are still finding out about bits and pieces that don't quite work in the way we expected.
- Before the school was “closed” I stressed the importance of remaining “academically active” for our students. It is vital that students complete the work that is set for them by their staff. After the Easter holiday there will be an increase in expectations around the quantity and quality of work from our students. I urge parents to ensure that there is a structure and focus on school work at key times during the day. At some point, life will return to normal and the children will need to hit the ground running in the best way possible.
- I would urge all of our students to maintain a close focus on our key ethos of “altruism” – being kind is probably more important than ever.
- Our website has some very useful information to support parents during these challenging times. Please look at the following link <https://www.cc-hs.com/helplines-apps-and-websites-to-support-parents/>
- **Year 11 and 13 “exam” grades.** At the time of writing we have yet to receive specific guidance on the methodology for awarding grades this summer. We have received information from Ofqual last week which stated:

“We are rapidly working up plans to implement the arrangements the Secretary of State for Education has set out for exams this summer and, with exam boards and teaching bodies, are making considerable progress.”

Students understandably want reassurance, and teachers urgently need to know what to do, and when. We expect to publish detailed information about the process and timetable which will apply this summer next week. This will include the steps we would like teachers to follow and more detailed guidance on how to consider the full range of evidence they will have available when submitting their assessment grades. We are talking to teaching representatives to make sure that what we are planning is manageable and appropriate, so that students, parents, carers and teachers can have confidence in the approach.

We will outline by Easter the process we will follow to make sure grades are fair across schools and colleges, as well as our proposals for appeals. We will also say more as soon as possible about the arrangements for additional exams in the new academic year.

We want to reassure students waiting for news that we are doing everything we can to make sure they are not disadvantaged by these unprecedented circumstances.”

- **To reemphasise the point made in a recent letter to Year 11 and 13 students, the grades issued last week were not the final grades as the method for calculating these has not been released yet. We will inform students and parents when we are in a better position to offer more concrete guidance.**
- I have been incredibly grateful to our support staff during these last two weeks especially our cleaning staff who have deep cleaned every area of the school, our site staff who have ensured that the site is safe, have driven minibuses, have delivered meals to families struggling to cope, our canteen staff have been in to cook meals and prepare lunches for delivery, our student support / pastoral staff have been keeping in touch with students and families, sending the government key data etc and our Teaching Assistants and technicians have been phenomenal in supervising the students actually in school and our ICT team have been brilliant at setting up robust learning platforms and in dealing with every single query or concern that has been directed to them . At a time of crisis, the teams have all pulled together to ensure that the show is kept well and truly on the road. I couldn't wish for a better group of people.

And finally...

This Easter marks the official end of Mr Wakelin's time as being Deputy Headteacher at Codsall High School. Whilst he will still be at the school undertaking some part time teaching he is stepping down from the role he has held since 2006. He has been an integral part of the school's success over the years and I am very grateful to have had him on my team for the last five years. He has a meticulous eye for detail, a real clarity about his core beliefs and an absolute determination to get the very best outcomes for the students at Codsall High. He is loud and proud about Codsall High School (very, on occasions!) and literally has Codsall High imprinted upon his very person!

This is not the way I would have wanted to have marked such an important occasion but the situation is such that it will have to serve for now. When times are back to normal we will make sure that Mr Wakelin gets the (semi) send off he deserves to properly mark his contribution to so many young lives over the years.

I would normally finish the Easter newsletter with some kind of plea to not eat too much chocolate etc but, do you know what, if you can get hold of some, fill your boots!

Yours faithfully



Alun Harding
Executive Headteacher
Codsall High Federation of Schools