



12th May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that this letter finds you all in good health and good spirits and that you have found my weekly Briefings informative and helpful as we continue our journey through 'lockdown' together. Following the Prime Minister's address this week, I wanted to write to update you on matters here at school and our plans for the weeks and months ahead.

Firstly, sincere thanks for the positive response, engagement and feedback to the school closure situation which came upon us all very quickly. The staff here at school worked wonders in preparing work for your children in such a short space of time and I hope that the ongoing provision has supported your child's learning at home. It is important to reiterate that all we ask of your child is that they do their best – we wouldn't ask any more than that – and their best is *their* personal best, nobody else's. What might be one hour's work for one person might be 30 minutes or perhaps over an hour for someone else. We also understand that many students are helping around the house, looking after brothers and sisters, and that you as parents and carers are supporting your children's learning amongst everything else that you are having to manage at this time.

We know that it feels very strange at the moment for children not to be saying hello and good morning to their friends on the bus, on the yard, or in form time. I know lots of them will be missing their friends, teachers and many of the things about daily life at St Nicholas. But we are all still here for them, and they can get in touch with us if there is anything we can do to help – they can email their subject teachers with questions about their work and they can email the Learning Mentor team if they need to get in touch with them too. I have written a personal letter to all students today via Ruler, and this letter to you echoes many of the themes contained within my communication to them.

As well as preparing online learning, staff are continuing to work hard 'behind the scenes' to generate Centre Assessment Grades for Year 11 GCSE and Year 13 A-Level students, to re-schedule information and activities for Year 6 transition and we have been providing pre-learning activity packs for all students looking to join our Sixth Form in September. We have also been completing our timetable for next academic year and conducting 'virtual' recruitment to ensure we are fully staffed in September. We have also ensured that all families entitled to digital devices from the government and free school meals have received these.



Earlier this week, the Prime Minister outlined the Government's proposed timelines for possible school re-opening and the DfE have since released further guidance for secondary schools. Currently, the school still remains closed to all but 'vulnerable' students and children of Critical Workers as defined by the Government with the appropriate risk assessments in place for the numbers of students on site. We, of course, want students to return to their learning as soon as possible, but I must make it absolutely clear that **there will be no additional partial or full re-opening St Nicholas Catholic High School until it is absolutely safe to do so.** Your child's safety and the safety of all the staff and children at St Nicholas is my primary concern and nothing will compromise this position. Detailed preparations and necessary risk assessments will take as long as they need to take so that we can ensure that each and every member of our community is safe on their return to school.

Finally, I wanted you to know that in my letter to students I offered a sincere and heartfelt well-done for everything that they are doing at the moment – for their family, friends and themselves. Every day at St Nicholas, I am immensely proud and continually impressed at the positivity, maturity, good humour and dedication of your children– they are what makes St Nicholas so special – we are community who care for each other, who always give of our best and who never give up. Everyone Matters.

I will continue to update you as matters progress and I offer every good wish and blessing for yourselves and your families.



Richard Woods
Headteacher

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