

15 January 2021

Dear Parents / Carers,

I would like to start by thanking you for your ongoing support through such difficult times. For many parents / carers you will be feeling such disappointment in the way your son / daughter's education has been affected by the lockdown in March and subsequently this academic year. The decisions around the colleges opening and learning experiences have been put through incredible pressure this term by rapidly changing government decisions, and we know this can be unsettling to everybody. I would like to reassure you that at S6C, comes the most dedicated and passionate staff that want to fulfill their roles in being the best educators that they can be.

Remote learning

Our students are now very familiar with our Google Classroom resource area and Google Chat function to participate in live lessons. We are delighted by the level of engagement we are seeing in our online classes this term. Most students are able to connect to lessons and are participating with enthusiasm.

Staff are planning to deliver engaging lessons that stretch and challenge students, and allow students to build on their previous knowledge and understanding gained. Work is being marked online, mainly through Google Classroom and students are able to receive feedback on their progress and their next steps for development. All staff will continue to set self directed study to allow students to be actively engaged in their independent work. A copy of our remote learning expectations linked to the Department for Education guidelines can be [found here](#).

In weekly online faculty meetings, staff are working collaboratively to share good practice in their delivery of lessons. Staff are reviewing how we can make lessons more interactive and how we can increase collaboration and discussion. We feel this is an important area that we want to continue to develop; it is so important working from home that we stay connected to each other and are not working in isolation. This works best when students are at least able to have a working microphone ideally on a computer or laptop so they can engage more easily in discussions. It is important to let us know if there are concerns about accessing lessons and we will endeavour to try and help. The college has applied for SIM cards that we will be able to distribute where broadband is being stretched to capacity at home whilst multiple devices are being used by the family. We may also be able to support the access of devices, so please do get in touch with Rebecca Anderson if you need help. Alternatively, the government guidelines have been updated to allow students to attend college if they have IT issues. Please let us know if this is something you wish to discuss.

Next week we will be sending out a survey to gather your views about the learning experience each young person is getting. It will help us to review what we are doing well and to look at adjustments we may need to make.

GCSE results

Despite the disruption to student learning between March and the end of the last academic year, we entered our students in the GCSE English and Maths classes for a November entry. With only a 6 week window of intensive work we hoped to provide an important experience for the students to at least aim to match the centre assessed grade they were awarded last year. This was an important foundation milestone to build on. I am delighted that all students did achieve that, with a number of students getting their grade 4 pass and some achieving a grade 5 pass, which shows exceptional progress. One year 13 student also sat their GCSE Maths from an entry grade of a 5 to aim for a university entry that required a grade 6, and we are incredibly proud that this grade was achieved. Well done to all our students for their hard work.

Lateral flow testing

The college has been busy training staff to participate in the testing of lateral flow tests for students attending the Hub and for the staff present on site. The process has been led very efficiently and competently by our support team, and I would like to publicly thank them for undertaking such an important role in safety for our college community. We will put together a short video next week to demonstrate the process and will share that in our news feed for you.

Pastoral and Life Skills:

Students and parents/carers are reminded to keep in touch with us and update us if there are any changes in your young person's wellbeing (physical, mental, emotional, or family). We can offer support if we know.

We'd also like to remind parents/carers to let us know if your young person has tested positive for covid, or is self isolating at the request of the test and trace system - we have to send these details to national data reporting, and we'd also like to know so we can offer support and take it into account in your studies. Please call the college on 01722 597970 or email office@salisbury6c.ac.uk.

We know that some students are facing difficult times with family illness or financial worries - please be quick to let us know if we can help. This week in Life Skills students were asked to take a tour of the Wellbeing section of our Student Information Classroom and identify where they find info on 24/7 support, college support, physical exercise programmes, help with sleep, tips for mental and emotional wellbeing in lockdown, online safety, and other issues. We think that knowing where to find high quality information could change lives - either theirs or that of a friend/family member, now or in the future. We'd really appreciate it if you could remind your young person to take a look and fill out the form that shows they've engaged - it'll only take them half an hour and no one regrets being well informed!

There are so many sources of excellent support on the internet - this one is great for young and old and reminds us how we can look after ourselves and others in this difficult time.

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>

I would like to wish you all a very restful and safe weekend.

Yours sincerely,

L Henderson

Louise Henderson
Vice Principal