

12th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Since I last wrote to you, there have been considerable changes. The Prime Minister announced on Monday 4th January the third National Lockdown and that all schools will 'close' this week (with the exception of small number of students who will attend on-site provision) with a view to reviewing this at the February half term. We were looking forward to welcoming all of our students back on a staggered return and so this announcement was incredibly disappointing for all of us. We do understand, however, the need to prioritise the safety of each other by reducing the transmission of the virus.

Whilst the lockdown is not what we hoped for, it is important to understand that the Academy is not indeed 'closed.' We **are open** but just operating in a different way. From an Academy perspective, we are in a very different position to the one we were in in March last year during the first lockdown. We have worked incredibly hard to develop remote learning provision and students have all been trained on how to learn in this new way. There are still challenges ahead but we have everything we need in place to deliver a quality remote-learning provision for all of our students.

It is now essential that students, with your support, access all of their lessons daily and complete the work required. We will be monitoring the attendance and engagement of students each lesson and communicating regularly with home to celebrate achievement and ensure that everyone is giving their 'Personal Best.'

January BTEC/OCR Examinations

As an Academy Trust, we want to ensure that all students are supported to achieve their full potential. Many students have been working hard in preparing for unit examinations for vocational qualifications which are due to be sat over the next few weeks. However, following the Government announcement regarding BTEC/OCR examinations, we are advising that our students do not sit these examinations and focus their efforts on their remote learning and assignments. It is highly likely that this work will go some way towards contributing towards their final grade.

Y11 and Y13 Examinations

The Prime Minister also announced that summer examinations will not go ahead as planned this year. We fully understand how disappointing this is for our students who have been working so hard. However, it is essential that this hard work continues (online and when we fully re-open) as, again, it is highly likely that this work will go some way towards contributing towards their final grade. Whilst the Secretary of State for Education has yesterday announced that exam grades will be awarded by schools, we have limited information about this. All students must continue to work hard and complete everything that is asked of them online.

Changes to Remote Learning from Monday 18th January

From Monday, **ALL** students will access live lessons from their teachers via Microsoft TEAMS. Students will follow their normal timetable of **five** periods a day and all lessons will commence in line with the usual Academy day. Lessons will last for **50 minutes** in total. Links for the lesson and associated resources will be shared via Class Charts. There will be no live lesson for Core PE, instead the PE department will be sharing fitness challenges via Class Charts and Twitter.

'Monday Morning Well-being' and Form Time via Microsoft TEAMS

This week, we introduced our weekly well-being survey via Class Charts. This allows us to track engagement, the suitability of the work set and the well-being of our students. We are really pleased with how the students have engaged with this so far and have been able to use the information to support students where necessary. This will be a regular weekly survey and all students will access during Form Time at 8.45am on a Monday morning.

Students will also access Collective Worship on their scheduled assembly day each week. TEAMS links will be shared via Class Charts.

Monday – Year 11
Tuesday – Year 10
Wednesday – Year 9
Thursday – Year 8
Friday – Year 7

Proud to be a member of



ALL SAINTS
Multi Academy Trust

All Saints Multi Academy Trust is the operating name for The Liverpool Joint Catholic and Church of England Academies Trust

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It is important that we maintain healthy communication between parents, carers and the Academy during these difficult times. With this in mind, we will be recording a Q&A session each week in response to questions or concerns from parents. If you have a question or concern about remote learning, please email them directly to remoteteachingquestions@astn.uk by 1.00pm on a Friday. Each Monday we will upload a recorded response to your questions to the home page of our website theacademyofstnicholas.org.uk.

Class Charts App

If you have not already downloaded the Class Charts application from your provider, we encourage this so that you can monitor the progress of remote learning for your child.

Parents' Evenings

Y11, Y13 and Y9 were due to have Parents' Evenings this month. Given the current circumstances, we are going to postpone these events until we have a clearer idea about when schools will return. We will, however, be offering additional 'live' events for Year 13 and Year 11 to support them in preparing for the months ahead. These dates will be confirmed when we have more detailed information about the cancellation of exams.

Free School Meals

Currently, we are offering food parcels to students who are eligible for free school meals. From Monday 18th January, these parcels will typically include:

1 x 800g Medium Sliced Bread
1 x 180g Grated Mild White Cheddar
6 x Free Range Eggs
1 x 1 litre UHT Semi-Skimmed Milk
4 x 150g Dunsters Farm Yogurts
1 x Banana
2 x Red apples
2 x Satsumas
1 x Cucumber
2 x Jacket Potatoes
1 x 420g Baked Beans
1 x 326g Sweetcorn
1 x 500g Fusilli Pasta

Please let us know via info@ASTN.uk if you require a food parcel for the week commencing 18th January. We will require this information by the 13:00 p.m. on Wednesday 13th January.

Devices

We have issued a number of digital devices to students in need of one. If you are having difficulty accessing a digital device e.g, a laptop or a tablet, please contact the email below so that we can offer support. These devices are given out on a lease agreement and should be returned when students return to school. These can be collected from the PODs at the front of the Academy building. Please ensure when onsite that you follow government guidance on social distancing and face coverings.

The Government has now announced support for some students having difficulty accessing WiFi. If you require support and currently have a mobile phone with any of the following providers: *02, Three, Smarty, Virgin Mobile, EE, Tesco Mobile* or *Sky Mobile* please could you contact us via info@ASTN.uk with the following information:

- The name of the student
- The name of the account holder
- The network of the mobile phone
- The mobile phone number

Testing

Due to the current situation, the mass testing programme will not take place in schools as yet. We anticipate that this will be something we develop when school is fully open.

Finally, I hope this letter helps to settle any concerns that you have over the announcements made by the government. Inevitably, there will be regular announcements so please keep checking the website for further updates. As we informed you last term, we will use email as our primary method for communicating with parents.

Yours faithfully

J. E. Sing

Mrs J Sing
Headteacher