



4th December 2020

lrr/jcl/stjccovid19.04122020

Dear Parents and Carers

ST JOHN'S MARLBOROUGH – COVID 19

As week 5 passes, I am pleased once again to be able to thank you all for your continued efforts in helping us keep St John's open. Our attendance has, once again, been considerably above the national average and the students continue to comply with the need to wear a face mask, respect social distancing and sanitise. We must never be complacent however, but we do need to acknowledge the significant contribution they all make to keeping St John's open to all.

Summer 2021 Exams

The Education Secretary has confirmed that GCSE and A-level exams will go ahead as planned in 2021. We are aware just how hard our Year 11 and 13 students are working and that anxiety levels increase when students are unclear as to what is expected of them. Below is a summary of the announcement that we have received this week and it will help you to be aware of how we are continuing to best prepare all our students.

What changes have been announced?

Students will be given advance notice of some topic areas in exams to allow them to focus their revision. We don't expect to know more detail until the New Year, and it will take some time for agreement to be reached on what students need to know. For now, we will continue to teach as planned, because we still expect to have to teach the whole specification for each subject.

We understand that students will be given exam aids, such as formula sheets in some exams so they have less to remember. Once again, there are no clear details and it will take some time to finalise these arrangements. This will happen at the final awarding stage for each qualification. For those students studying for vocational qualifications, we expect similar arrangements will be made so that these students are not disadvantaged. Grading for all exams will be in line with the national outcomes in 2020.

Backup plans

The usual special consideration process will be used if a student is not able to do all exams in a subject. There will be some additional exams after the main exam period to give students a second chance to sit papers if they miss all exams in a subject. If neither of the above are possible, then, in exceptional circumstances, we might need to give a validated teacher informed assessment. As things stand, there will be no centre assessment grades this year.



COVID-19 measures on school transport.

All parents and carers of students who use the buses to attend St John's should have received a clear directive from Wiltshire Council Passenger Transport Unit. The letter stresses that as of **Monday 7th December**, it will be a mandatory condition of travel that all passengers over the age of 11 **must** wear a face mask at all times. This is a strengthening of the previous Government led decision where it was only recommended practice. Exemption passes are to be issued by us at St John's so please contact us directly if your child has a specific and genuine medical exemption.

Please be aware that drivers are being made aware of the Council's "three strikes" policy whereby students will be refused transport for a two-week period if they breach the rules without clear exemption three times. Those travelling on SEND transport will be exempt from this policy.

Notification of confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases

It remains vital you let the school know through the COVID-19 email - covid-19@stjohns.excalibur.org.uk if you have any pandemic related concerns we need to be aware of. This is particularly important if you need to take a test or have a positive case. We also continue to keep up to date our dedicated area on the school website which can be found at:

<https://www.stjohns.excalibur.org.uk/latest-covid-19-information/>.

We are fortunate enough to have an Academy Nurse at St John's who monitors these concerns regularly and the sooner we know, the sooner we can take action. There will be further information to follow on how the test and trace system will run during the Christmas break.

The Twitter feed continues to be a very useful way of staying in touch with what St John's are doing in the community, so please follow that and re-tweet if you wish.

As always, I hope that you and your family continue to keep safe and don't forget that school closes at 1220 on Friday 18th December.

With kindest regards



Mr I Tucker
Principal

