



Smithdon High School

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Dear Parents

As I write this, we are approaching the end of the tenth week since the school closed to all but key worker children. I know that many children and parents have been engaged in the home schooling that is taking place and I am assured that the Smithdon staff have been providing as much support as they can given the current situation. I would also like to thank all those parents for their support, patience and kind words over the past few weeks.

During half term I have asked staff not to set any work for students, in order to give both students and parents a break. Work will resume at the beginning of June and we are trying to develop new methods of delivery, which may support your child further.

Whilst the school is closed to most students and staff, we are taking the opportunity to refurbish parts of the school. In particular, the Art and ICT rooms in C Block are currently getting a complete overhaul for when students finally return to us.

For those students in Year 11, who will not be returning, staff have been working hard to provide the Examination Boards with the information they require to calculate GCSE grades. These will be published on 20 August and I will write to Year 11 separately nearer that date to explain how we will organise Results Day in a safe way. Can I encourage all Year 11 students to continue to work on Maths and English, should they need to retake in the autumn. Please be assured that Sixth Forms and Colleges will do their utmost to get your child onto their chosen courses in September. Springwood Sixth Form has also produced materials on its website which should be used to support students in preparing to begin their A Levels courses.

For Year 6 students, who will be starting at Smithdon in the new academic year, we will do our best to aid the transition to high school. This is a challenge at the moment, but Mrs Robinson is currently writing to those students to explain our current arrangements and she will write to them again after half term with further updates.

You may also have heard on the news that specific year groups in some schools will be starting back to school on 1 June. I am keen that students start back at school as soon as possible, but only when it is safe to do so.

As such, we may provide a single meeting for the current Year 10 and a parent to discuss progress so far and how we can further support students with their studies and well-being over the next few weeks. Again, we will write after half term to confirm details of how this could happen in a safe way. Any arrangements we make will be supported by guidance from the government and other professional bodies and underpinned by rigorous risk assessment. Currently there are no plans for students in Years 7 - 9 to return to school before September, but I will write to you if this situation changes.

When, as a school, we know more and have clear communication from the government about reopening, we will pass this on straight away. At present, I could not give a date and can only make assumptions, which means planning and organising remains a challenge. What I can assure you, however, is that we will do our best to return to normal as soon as it is safe to do so. In the meantime, please stay safe and well and we hope to welcome our students back as soon as we safely can.

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Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J Hirst', written over a circular mark.

Mr J Hirst
Headteacher