



St Mary's Catholic School

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where everyone can succeed



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Dear Parent or Carer,

Re: Key events and information for Year 13 parents and students

I hope that your son or daughter has had a successful first half term back at school, albeit under highly challenging circumstances. We have been very pleased with the way our Year 13 students have responded to this unprecedented situation. At the start of the school year in September, students settled very quickly into routines after the long absence and, during the course of this half term, they have approached their studies with a growing sense of purpose and determination, fully aware that this is a very important year in their education.

Due to the fact that much time was lost in the summer term of the last academic year, as well as the fact that there has been ongoing disruption this term, our focus in lessons so far has rightly been on teaching and learning, and assessing students' progress holistically, rather than via lots of formal assessment. Improving knowledge and understanding across all subject areas has been our priority. By revisiting key concepts, as well as introducing new material, students have been able to catch up with any learning, as necessary. We have been very pleased with the progress that students have made and it has been reassuring to see their confidence continue to grow as the weeks have passed.

Ordinarily, we would have informed parents of Year 13 in September about the arrangements for key events during the course of the year, such as mock exams, achievement data points and Parents' Evening, so that you have a clear idea about what to expect and when. As I am sure you will understand, many aspects of our work will have to be organised differently this year. For example, currently, Parents' Evenings are not possible in school, due to health and safety, and social distancing guidelines. However, as always, if you would like to discuss any aspect of your child's progress in school, you are welcome to telephone the school to speak to any of your son/daughter's subject teachers at any time.

With regards to the issuing of achievement data, this system is unchanged. Parents will continue to receive an achievement summary at the end of each term, providing you with a detailed update of your child's current academic performance in all subject areas, as well as information about effort and attitude. You will receive your first achievement summary at the end of this term. Areas such as mock examinations are also more complicated this year, due to the logistics and current restrictions in school. However, they will take place, given they are an important aspect of your child's preparation for their summer examinations next year. We are currently finalising plans and I will be in touch with you very soon after the half-term break to outline further details. Our priority, as always, is the health and safety of our students and staff. Please also be assured that students will be given plenty of time to prepare for any mock examination period and we will continue to provide students with lots of support, so that they can approach any formal assessment schedule feeling confident and well-prepared.

Moreover, your child will continue to receive excellent pastoral care and support from our dedicated team of teachers and support staff. We are very mindful of the fact that preparing for A level exams can be an anxious period for students. In the context of a global pandemic, these worries are likely to be exacerbated. Whilst we want students to work hard and achieve their academic potential, just as importantly, we also want them to feel happy and enjoy their time in Year 13, secure in the knowledge that we are always here to help and support them.

Thank you for your continued support and if you have any queries at all, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Nelson, the Assistant Sixth Form Leader for Year 13.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Stanton

Assistant Headteacher

