

Friday 27 March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

As we come to the end of the first week of this new situation I wanted to take the opportunity to say thank you to you and to the students for your efforts and understanding. As I said yesterday this is new territory and the weekend will allow an opportunity for us all to reflect. I hope despite the lock down that families will find time to try new things and relax together. In normal circumstances today would be the start of the Easter Holidays and so as I clarified in my letter of 25 March, during this period (from Monday 30th March to Monday 13th April 2020 inclusive), teachers will not be setting work daily for students as we have been doing so far. We will of course continue to be open over the period for vulnerable children and children of critical workers.

### **Remote Learning**

In an effort to continue to provide you with support during this period of 'staying at home and away from others (social distancing)', we have updated our 'Online Resources to Support Home Learning' document, which now includes links to over sixty resources available to access for free online to support learning at home. This document is now available on our website at [www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk/covid-19-updates.html](http://www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk/covid-19-updates.html) should you wish to make use of it over Easter.

We have also made available on our website links to a range of free online learning resources relating to coronavirus, originally collated by University College London Institute of Education to support parents and carers when helping their children understand, make sense of and learn about coronavirus. You can find the resources here [www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk/parentsandcoronavirus.html](http://www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk/parentsandcoronavirus.html).

### **Free School Meals**

We have been alerted by the DFE that some parents have received an email stating: 'As schools will be closing, if you're entitled to free school meals, please send your bank details and we'll make sure you're supported'. Please note that this is a scam email. Do not respond and delete it immediately. If you think you might have been a victim of cyber-crime, please visit Action Fraud or contact them on 0300 123 2040. Citizen's Advice also provide advice and support on online fraud. You can call their dedicated helpline 0808 250 5050 or contact them online at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/get-help-with-online-scams](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/get-help-with-online-scams). Additionally, if you have any concerns, questions or queries about free school meals, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### **GCSE, A-Level and other examinations**

Further to my recent updates, Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator, today released a further statement (I provide a link to such in the collection at the end of this letter) regarding students' grades this summer. In summary, Ofqual state that they 'expect to publish detailed information about the process and timetable which will apply this summer next week,' which will include 'the steps we would like teachers to follow and more detailed guidance on how to consider the full range of evidence they will have available when submitting their assessment grades.' It is emphasized that by Easter Ofqual will outline the process they will follow 'to make sure grades are fair across schools and colleges... [and] to make sure [students] are not disadvantaged by these unprecedented circumstances.' Ofqual also state that the details to be outlined by Easter will include information 'about the arrangements for additional exams in the new academic year.'

In addition, Ofqual have also provided a statement (a link to which is provided again at the end of this letter) regarding vocational and technical qualifications. They state that they 'are working as quickly as possible to develop an approach which enables learners to get the qualifications they deserve and that they need to progress.'

We will of course keep you as up to date with developments and detail as and when we have them.

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I will keep in touch over the coming weeks, ensuring that you are kept as up to date as possible with the ongoing situation. We are all facing extraordinary, stressful and worrying times, and I want to make sure that we at the College support families as best as we possibly can. We continue to look forward to the day when we will be able to re-open fully, and thank you unreservedly again for your continued support and patience. As ever, if you have any further concerns that you feel we may be able to help with, please do not hesitate to contact us.

I hope you and your loved ones keep well over the coming Easter period, stay safe, stay at home, and look after each other. Again, please do not hesitate to contact us should you need.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Brett', enclosed in a white rectangular box.

**Derrick Brett**  
Principal

## Links to current advice

(Please do check these pages regularly as they are updated constantly.)

- HM Government main coronavirus page  
[www.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.gov.uk/coronavirus)
- Okehampton College COVID-19 Latest Updates and Home Learning  
[www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk/covid-19-updates.html](http://www.okehamptoncollege.devon.sch.uk/covid-19-updates.html)
- NHS Health information and advice  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/)
- Full guidance on staying at home and away from others (social distancing)  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others)
- Guidance on social distancing for everyone in the UK and protecting older people and vulnerable people at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19)  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people)
- Guidance on shielding and protecting people defined on medical grounds as extremely vulnerable to coronavirus (COVID-19)  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19)
- Stay at home guidance for households with possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance)
- Information for parents and carers about the closure of schools  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers)
- Free School Meals Guidance  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance)
- Guidance for schools about temporarily closing  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-school-closures/guidance-for-schools-about-temporarily-closing)
- Maintaining Educational Provision (including 'Critical Worker' lists and principles).  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision)
- Guidance on vulnerable children and young people  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people)
- Guidance for educational settings on COVID-19  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19)
- Information on the cancellation of GCSEs, AS and A levels in 2020  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020)
- Ofqual's latest statement on coronavirus re Examinations  
[www.gov.uk/government/news/further-update-on-2020-exams](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-update-on-2020-exams)
- Ofqual's latest statement on vocational and technical qualifications  
[www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-in-2020](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-vocational-and-technical-qualifications-in-2020)