



9th April 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

COVID19 – Parent Update 09.04.2020

I hope you were all able to stay safe and enjoy some of the Easter break, despite the exceptional circumstances in which we currently find ourselves. As the Summer Term is about to start, I wanted to share with you news and plans for the coming weeks.

The government have today announced that schools will remain closed until further notice, except for children of critical workers and children who are vulnerable, and will only re-open when it is deemed safe to do so. Therefore, the only in-school provision will remain for the children of key workers and vulnerable children. Guidelines on social distancing in school will continue to be stringently adhered to. **Please remember that the school is only open for those children who absolutely need to attend. If your child can safely remain at home, they should do so, and if your child has, or develops, a continuous cough or a temperature, you must ensure that they do not attend school.** If your circumstances have changed over the holidays and you need/no longer need your child to attend school after Easter, please contact Mrs Alison Moxey on amoxey@iscaexeter.co.uk.

For general information about school closures, government guidance aimed specifically at parents and carers is now available at:

[Closure of educational-settings - information for parents and carers.](#)

This also includes helpful information about keeping children safe on-line.

Summer Term

In anticipation of the fact that schools will not fully re-open over coming weeks, we will be moving to the next phase of our on-line learning strategy, which will cover learning until May half-term. This will focus on the consolidation and application of knowledge. Teachers will be setting work which revisits previous learning and students will be quizzed/tested on their knowledge recall. This will include contents from the Spring term's knowledge organisers.

We have now created individual teacher classrooms on Google Classroom which students will be required to join. This does not mean that students will have to be on-line at the specific time of their lesson. Rather, it will be the forum within which they can access their learning resources for each lesson. This will also assist teachers in monitoring that all students are engaging with their learning across all subjects. Within each classroom, every student will have their own digital work book; effectively an electronic version of an exercise book. Students should ensure that each piece has a title and date, in the same way as would be expected in school. Teachers will then provide feedback on the work completed. In addition, automated testing will be used by the teachers to assess students' knowledge retention and application.

As we now move to an extended phase of on-line learning from home, our expectation is that all students will log into their classrooms and complete school work daily. We have noticed, in particular, that the Sparx completion rate so far has been lower than expected and I must stress that all students

need to complete at least the mandatory part of the set Sparx work each week. This is essential in developing their knowledge and skills in Mathematics. Students' access to their learning will be checked by teachers and contact will be made with students over the coming weeks to ensure no-one falls behind. In addition, tutors will telephone their tutees over the first few weeks of term to touch base and ensure that all are safe and well and engaging with their school work. If your child does not have access to the internet and/or an electronic device to complete their school work and we are not already aware of this, please call the school on the main Reception number to let us know as soon as possible.

If your child has not yet opened their Term 3 knowledge organiser, we would encourage them to do so as soon as possible, ready to start in earnest after the Easter break. These are available electronically from our school website and via Google Classroom. If you have experienced difficulties accessing the document, please contact us at adminoffice@iscaexeter.co.uk.

We appreciate that supporting your child's learning while potentially working for home yourselves can be a challenge and the student timetable is only there to help structure students' learning and maintain their focus rather than a framework we expect to be rigidly adhered to. My staff team remain very much on hand if you or your child need assistance so please do not hesitate to contact them. We are here to help.

Year 11

Guidance has now been received from Ofqual on how to generate and submit Centre Assessed Grades for our Year 11 students. These will be compiled based on teacher assessments and will undergo a robust process of moderation before being ultimately scrutinised and approved by me as Head of Centre. Please be assured that grades will be a comprehensive reflection of each student's achievement and ability. Please note that we will not be permitted to share the grades with students before they are submitted.

We are continuing to work with local further education and apprenticeship providers to help students through the next phase of their education. More information on this will be given in my next update letter on Friday 17th April.

Safeguarding

An addendum to our school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy has been produced to clarify best practice and expectations during the current period of closure. This is available on our website for your information.

Well Being

Looking out for our students' mental health is paramount during these times of physical isolation and we have posted additional resources on our school website, which we hope you will find helpful, in addition to the links below:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>
<https://www.kooth.com/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/about-change4life>

Please encourage your child to stay in touch with their tutors, teachers and peers during this period of home learning to remain connected, safe and well.

Trips and Visits

Advice from our insurers and trip providers is still being sought. We will provide further updates on individual trips and activities as soon as we are able to.

Free School Meals

These are uncertain times for many families where parents/guardians may currently be furloughed and facing financial difficulty. If your circumstances have changed since last term and you need to apply for

your child to receive free school meals, please register on Devon County Council's Citizens Portal using the following link (there is a designated button for register for FSMs):

https://oneonline.devon.gov.uk/CCSCitizenPortal_LIVE/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2fCCSCitizenPortal_live

If your child is eligible for free school meals, you will receive a letter at the start of next week outlining the arrangements for you. In essence, a voucher will be sent to you weekly by email to the value of £15 per child. If you would prefer your child to receive a food parcel instead, please let us know by emailing fsm@iscaexeter.co.uk. If you do not have access to email, please call the school reception on Tuesday. Free school meals will only be provided in school for those children attending school during the day.

Year 8 Options

A final reminder please to ensure that all Year 8 students confirm their option choices by no later than Monday 20th April by completing the form on the link below.

[Year 8 Options Form](#)

This is essential in helping us plan next year's staffing levels and our timetable. If your child remains undecided and would benefit from further guidance, please do not hesitate to contact their teachers, tutor or Head of Year.

Performance Platforms

I would like to close this update with the upbeat news of our on-line school performance platforms. There have been two so far, with a 'staff special' planned for tomorrow. This will include excerpts of an interview Mrs Vallance carried out with internationally acclaimed percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie.

The line-ups for the start of next term are already shaping up:

Week 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unklN5mG4IY>

Week 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7PKD8pQ5UJU>

The channel that hosts the platforms is: <https://www.youtube.com/user/iscaacademy>

Performances are premiered at 3pm every Friday.

There are also free concerts and plays being streamed online, accessible through links posted on Google Classroom by our Performing Arts Team.

On behalf of everyone at Isca Academy, I wish you all a restful and safe Easter weekend as Spring seems to have finally arrived, and look forward to continuing to work in partnership with you next term.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Aimee Mitchell, Headteacher