

7th May 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

COVID19 – Parent Update 07.05.2020

Expected Government Update

As you may already be aware, the government has indicated that they will make an announcement this Sunday regarding lockdown, which may or may not affect the current situation for schools. We would like to reassure you that we have been working proactively to anticipate this, and will continue to do so on Monday, to be able to respond to any announcement made. We will update you on Tuesday, 12th May, should it be necessary to do so, in light of the government briefing on Sunday.

Home Learning

We are now a few weeks into remote learning and, with thanks for your support and feedback, we are able to continuously review and evolve our approach to make it more accessible, more engaging but also more sustainable for you, your child and our staff. We know this has been a challenge for many families and it has taken a great deal of adjustment from you, as well as our staff. Whatever this weekend's government announcement brings, it is likely that a level of remote learning will need to continue to feature in school life as we gradually move out of lockdown and it is important, therefore, that we maintain our efforts to get this right for your child.

With this in mind, and taking into account the feedback we have received, we have decided to make some adjustments to help introduce a streamlined structure to the learning day without losing the flexibility which families undoubtedly need. We will be moving to year group timetables rather than individual timetables from Monday, 11th May, which are attached to this letter. The lessons listed each day will be those which we recommend your child completes. This does not mean that your child has to complete the work in that particular subject during the designated hour if this is not feasible for your household, nor does it imply that the work has to take one hour to complete. However, **subject teachers will now be available on-line to help during the hour allocated to each lesson** on the timetable, and only at that time, so it is important that students requiring help follow the timetable to access the support they require in each subject. All feedback and guidance will now take place through Google Classroom, and not via direct email, so as to streamline the communication traffic to and from teachers and to provide consistently accessible, timely support. A student guide to the new system is attached.

Can I remind you that help with any technological issues preventing your child from accessing or navigating around Google Classroom is now available every Monday and Wednesday between 10am and 11am by emailing your contact details to adminoffice@iscaexeter.co.uk. A member of our team will then call you back to try and resolve the problem.

We remain aware of the potential impact of remote learning on students' mental health and would encourage you and them to check out the resources for support on our website. Most of all, we appreciate that the cornerstone of well-being is balance, and it is important that students balance home study with all the other activities that enrich their lives, such as playing games, baking, listening to music, going for walks as a family, and generally keeping their bodies and minds as active as current

circumstances allow. If there is to be a positive outcome from the current situation, it is that we have more time to spend with family members and whilst it is, of course, important that children keep up with their school work as much as possible, making the most of time together is equally, if not more, important. Your child's tutor remains on hand to offer pastoral support so please encourage your child to make contact if you feel they might need to.

You will also notice that the timetables include space ear-marked each week for 'Enrichment'. This can take the form of well-being enhancing activities of your child's choosing at home. However, we will also shortly be offering a bank of optional enrichment activities, such as painting tasks, cooking recipes, nature observation or small DT projects, which students can try out at their leisure. We hope this will help to bring further variety and balance in home learning. More information on where to find the activities will follow next week.

Exeter and Cornwall College Virtual Open Events

Cornwall College will be holding a virtual open event on Thursday 14th May between 5pm and 7pm. Students will have the opportunity to meet lecturers and explore different career pathways. To book on-line for a place, please visit <https://bit.ly/2xbB4jG> or find more information from www.cornwall.ac.uk.

Exeter College will be holding their virtual open event on Thursday 21st May. This is aimed at Year 11 students who have yet to submit an application (or who are thinking of changing their application) and students in Years 9 and 10 who are starting to think about their post-16 education choices. By registering, students will be given an individual timetable for the event. Further information can be found at: <https://exe-coll.ac.uk/open-events/>

Careerpilot Resources

In addition to our on-line learning, students can also access on-line careers sessions. These are available to all students from Year 7 upwards. Each session has been designed so students can explore this independently. More information can be found at: <https://www.careerpilot.org.uk/adviser-zone/home-learning-activities-students>. Further information is also being posted on our school social media site.

I would like to wish you all a safe and enjoyable bank holiday weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Aimee Mitchell, Headteacher