

19<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

**COVID19 – Parent Update 19.06.2020**

It was good to see more of our students back in school this week –a small return to business as usual! Well, when I say usual... we are now finding ourselves in the unprecedented position of having an on-site timetable for Year 10 groups in rotation, a timetable for the Essential School (mixed year groups), and a continuous online learning programme for all year groups, all running in parallel, so I would like to open today's letter by praising my team, for their energy, flexibility and ingenuity in managing the totally unusual, and for their unwavering commitment to the students of Isca Academy. Ultimately, however, none of this would have come together without your continued trust and support as we navigated our way through this term, and your children's incredible spirit in rising to the challenge. Thank you all.

**Year 10**

The picture for September remains unclear and we are planning for a number of possible scenarios, bearing in mind that the path of the virus over the rest of the Summer may continue to influence decisions. We are mindful that Year 10 students (and parents), in particular, will be anxious to know what the expectations upon them will be. They may be reassured to hear that indications from the government and exam boards are that adjustments to GCSE assessments are being planned to take into account the unusual circumstances students have encountered. In other words, we are not anticipating that schools and students will be expected to fit a year and a half's worth of learning into Year 11 to make up for lost time. Rather, we understand that the assessment model nationally will be reshaped to match the profile of this particular Year 10 cohort so that they are not disadvantaged by the impact of covid-19. An unusual problem calls for an unusual solution!

**Year 11**

There was sadness across the team this week as what would have been the date of the PROM came and went, without us having the opportunity to be with our Year 11 students to say farewell and celebrate their time with us. We are very aware of how unfinished and disappointing this must feel for them to see their journey at Isca Academy end so abruptly. As mentioned in previous letters, we are planning to reschedule their PROM in the next academic year, social distancing measures permitting, to give them their rightful send-off (and to make the most of their special gowns and tuxedos!). We are also preparing a virtual Leavers' Assembly, which will be shared with students shortly, and it will be possible to purchase a leaver's hoodie before the end of term; information on how to do this will follow next week. Students will also have an opportunity to come into the school, by appointment, over the next few weeks to collect any belongings which they wish to retrieve from the school building/lockers.

As Centre Assessed Grades have now been submitted to Ofqual for moderation, we appreciate that Year 11 students will be keen to know what happens next, and we will be sending them a separate letter today with details of what is planned for Results Day, which will be on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020. If you or your child have any questions after reading the letter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

If your child remains undecided about the next step in their education, is having second thoughts about their choice, or is simply struggling to access information from their chosen post-16 provider, please encourage them to contact Mrs Jan Taylor, Post-16 Mentor and Transition Co-ordinator at: [jtaylor@iscaexeter.co.uk](mailto:jtaylor@iscaexeter.co.uk). Students may also wish to consider apprenticeship opportunities, such as the ones currently being advertised by Exeter College: <https://exe-coll.ac.uk/apprenticeships/apprentices/>. Whatever your child is aspiring to do, we are here to help.

### **Free School Meals**

You may have seen in the press reports of the government's intention to reverse its original decision and to extend funding for Free School Meals over the remainder of the Summer, which we are obviously delighted about. We will provide guidance on how families can access/continue to access the vouchers over the school holidays as soon as the details are released and we can proceed.

### **Parent Governor**

You will have received information on the four expressions of interest for the parent governor role and how to cast your vote. Can I please remind you that the deadline for voting is Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Essential School**

Our in-school provision for vulnerable students and the children of key workers across Years 7, 8 and 9 who cannot be cared for at home remains available. If you need a new school place, by contact us at: [attendance@iscaexeter.co.uk](mailto:attendance@iscaexeter.co.uk)

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

**Miss Aimee Mitchell, Headteacher**