



LYDIARD PARK ACADEMY

22nd January 2021

Dear Parent

I hope that you and are your family are well and coping with all the latest restrictions. We are now half way through the term and it seems that the majority of pupils and teachers have settled into the routine of remote learning. I am extremely pleased with the very high level of engagement from pupils with only 5% of pupils attending less than 3 lessons across the week. We continue to review and refine our remote learning provision to ensure that we provide the best learning experiences possible for our pupils.

Summer Examinations for Years 11 and 13

As you will be aware the A-Level and Vocational exams have been cancelled for this summer. There is currently a Government consultation in place to decide how best to award the grades this summer and I would encourage parents to complete the consultation using the link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/953000/6743-1_GCSE_AS_and_A_level_grades_should_be_awarded_in_summer_2021.pdf

I have very briefly summarised the DFE proposals below:

Grades should be based on teacher assessment and awarded to reflect the standard at which pupils are performing with a breadth of evidence used to inform the teachers' judgement. Exam boards should provide a set of assessment/exam papers to support assessment and they should also support the internal quality assurance that takes place within schools. It is important that students continue their education throughout this academic year and will be assessed by their teachers in the period beginning May into early June. Teachers submit grades to the exam boards by mid-June with external quality assurance by the exam boards going on throughout June. The results will be issued to students once a quality assurance process is complete, probably early July and students being able to appeal immediately after the submission of results.

I will of course keep parents and pupils updated when we learn of the outcomes of the consultation.

Free School Meals

We will be providing food parcels up until the half term holiday, the contents of the parcels will change to offer variety. A two week parcel will be delivered direct to home addresses for the two weeks commencing 1st February 2021.

In line with the Government commitment for Free school Meal provision during the Christmas and February half term holidays, vouchers will be provided for the half term holiday in the same was as for the Christmas break.

After half term, we will be moving to giving vouchers which will be provided for a two week period at a time.



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Lateral Flow Testing

We are continuing to test staff and pupils who are attending school and have carried out over 200 tests so far and I am pleased to report that we have not had a positive test result to date. There has been a lot of coverage in the media about the pausing of tests and I have highlighted the latest DFE guidance:

'The main schools and colleges testing programme, using rapid lateral flow tests to find asymptomatic staff and pupils and those who have coronavirus (COVID-19) but do not have symptoms, is continuing. However, following [new advice from NHS Test and Trace and Public Health England \(PHE\)](#), we are temporarily pausing the daily contact testing element of the testing programme, which was in place as an alternative to self-isolation for those who came into contact with positive cases in schools. This will enable further evaluation to take place.

Rapid testing remains a vital part of our plan to suppress this virus. The use of rapid lateral flow tests is already proving beneficial in finding people with coronavirus (COVID-19) before they develop symptoms. We will therefore also be encouraging schools and colleges to increase regular testing of staff to twice weekly as further reassurance and to break chains of transmission during this period. Our guidance for secondary schools and colleges will be updated shortly.'

With this in mind, we will look to continue testing our staff when they come into school and increase the testing to twice a week for those staff in on two or more occasions throughout the week. Our plan will be to test those pupils whose parents have consented to a test prior to them returning to school.

It is encouraging that the Government have stated that schools will be prioritised when the current coronavirus lockdown restrictions are eased and that schools and parents will be given a clear two weeks notice. I sincerely hope that conditions across the country make it sooner rather than later. I wish you all a pleasant weekend.

Kind regards

Mr Pearson
Principal



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