



19 March 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians of The Ladies' College

Latest COVID 19 update and our work to support your daughter/s

Thank you for the messages of support and your understanding, most particularly since half term. We appreciate that everyone's world is being affected by Covid 19, in many different ways. There are certainly more questions than answers in all areas of life and it is a challenge to know what actions are necessarily the "best" for ourselves and for others. I am grateful for the guidance and advice from both The States of Guernsey and Public Health, who have communicated with us clearly and quickly, to help us to "do what is right, come what may". The response from our College community has also been terrific. Thank you.

We have continued to adjust our practices to manage social distancing as much as is feasible in a school environment and some of these ideas have come from students, as well as from common sense and advice from Public Health. I wanted to write to reassure you that should the decision be made to close the College, or any part of it, we believe we are ready and the majority of this letter is to outline what that looks like, as well as updating you with some of the details which have been shared with the girls recently.

Public Health Measures to Prevent the Spread of Infection were issued to us this morning and have been reviewed and actioned as directed.

To support the health of our school community:

- **anyone who has recently developed respiratory/flu-like symptoms (cough, sore throat, running or blocked nose, muscle pain or fatigue or a fever), no matter how mild, should not attend school.** This approach applies to teachers and students, and we thank you for your understanding when we take the decision to send your daughter/s home. All are welcome to return once symptoms are clear and an additional 48 hours has passed - in line with current Public Health guidance.
- the girls are reminded of the need for frequent hand washing in between activities, before and after meals and after using the toilet
- we have moved to enhance our cleaning provision on site to help reduce transmission
- we will ensure that only hard toys and equipment are made available for use during the course of the school day, as these can be wiped clean after use.

Contingency Plan - Senior School and Sixth Form

Should we be required to close to pupils and students, we have been working hard to ensure continuity for your daughter/s when they are at home – with work being set by teachers and arrangements ready to be actioned as followed.

We will keep the school open for adults who are able to work and, if feasible, will look to bring in some groups.

We are aware that not all students are able to come into school, so we have accelerated the work we were doing lower down the school and all 11-18 year olds are now able to use TEAMS. Subject teachers have been encouraged and received training to use this platform, which works in school and remotely.

We would anticipate that within 24 (working) hours of closing any part of the school, colleagues would be ready to get work online for students to access. The impact of maintaining provision over a prolonged period of time is yet to be fully explored and we will, of course, continue to monitor and review and adjust and adapt, should this action be needed.

Teachers have been asked to identify core information when setting work and we have already spoken about the responsibility of the girls to ensure that they seek help from their teachers and to be clear about their responsibility to complete the work. This is to avoid the need to revisit work that should have been understood and learned during any period of isolation, or closure.

We are also very aware of the need to encourage healthy lifestyles, which promote positive mental health and can increase our resilience when physically unwell. The graphic below is useful and the girls have already seen this over the past week. They have also been encouraged to plan their work around their normal time-table should they not be in school. There will be occasions when the teachers may be “live” online to provide support, guidance and encouragement! Teachers will communicate directly with their classes in this respect.

Key pieces of work will be reviewed by colleagues in order to try to keep abreast of what each student is doing, to check their understanding and to look to meet their individual needs.

SUCCESSFUL LEARNING ONLINE



Contingency Plan – Melrose and Pre-Preparatory Department

In the case of school closure, each class teacher will communicate specific information via Microsoft Teams, Seesaw or email.

Each class teacher will set a range of activities, these activities aim to cover the core curriculum which would have been taught at school, but not necessarily the same topics that would have been taught in class.

We would advise the girls to complete the equivalent of one Mathematics and one English task each day. This may be reading, spelling, Mathematics, Nessy Spelling, Spellodrome or a practical or written task. In addition, there are a range of cross-curricular activities for the girls to do.

There is an expectation to complete work, depending on circumstances. We will endeavour to provide feedback and mark work, however this may not always be possible. Clearly, if your daughter is unwell, it is not expected for these tasks to be completed.

Public Examinations

You will by now be aware that the Prime Minister and Mr Gavin Williamson (Secretary of State for Education) announced yesterday afternoon that “exams will not take place in May and June this year.”

We know that this announcement will cause concern and confusion amongst students who are focused on working towards their exams. Mr Johnson has stated that, although these measures have been put in place, “we will ensure that children will get their qualifications” and that they “won’t impede the progress of students”.

Ofqual, The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation, have issued this statement, “We welcome the certainty that the Secretary of State’s decision not to hold exams this summer provides in these challenging circumstances. We will now work urgently with the Department for Education to work through the detail of this decision and to provide more information as soon as possible.”

As soon as we have more information on the detail of the contingency planning being put in place, we will update you students and parents in Upper Five and the Upper Sixth.

We have reassured students this morning that a plan is being worked on by the exam boards, that they should continue to remain focused and making progress with their learning as we await clarity about what the proposed way ahead is.

Additional information

We have agreed to release two of our teachers from attending College, to enable them to return to their families on mainland Europe. One colleague was due to leave at the end of this term and the other will leave at the end of the academic year. The latter will continue to teach their classes remotely, with internal support available. Please be assured that this, and any other decision which we take, is made with the understanding that we will continue to provide the best educational provision that we can and that we also aim to support everyone in our community, who finds themselves in difficult circumstances.

World Happiness Day

There is some irony that this Friday is designated World Happiness Day. The following link <https://bit.ly/3dbCV8z> takes you to a talk by Dr Andy Cope. Colleagues in the Senior School and Sixth Form will plan to show this to the girls between now and Easter. The questions he poses may make it worth viewing more than once and I hope that it may be helpful to you in a small way too, even to just initiate a discussion with your daughter at some stage in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ashley Clancy

Ashley Clancy
Principal