



SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

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5th January 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Re: Headteacher's Update

Sadly, but understandably, we find ourselves back in a national lockdown and our students returning to online learning. As you were informed yesterday by Mrs Shaw, remote learning has started today with live lessons for Year 11 and Year 13, and a combination of online learning for the rest of the school. From Monday 11th January, all learning will take the form of live lessons for all year groups. This is a huge undertaking and we thank you in advance for your patience whilst a few technical and teething issues are resolved. Inevitably, there will be hiccups along the way, so please communicate with your child's form tutor or subject teacher should your child experience any difficulties whilst learning at home. Whilst live lessons are not the same as having the students in school, it does provide a certain level of structure and interaction; it is therefore crucial that students participate in live lessons and keep some sense of normality.

Students in Year 11 and Year 13 will have received communication today from Mr Payne and Mr Pike respectively. However, I want to echo their words and remind students that despite the Government announcement regarding exams, nothing formal or definitive has been shared with schools. With that in mind, I would urge students to continue to put everything in to their learning. Whatever system the Government settles on will require some kind of supporting evidence of student work. There is so much speculation currently about this, but I would recommend staying focused and continuing with courses to ensure that students will be prepared academically and emotionally for the next steps in their education. I could not be more proud of our students' maturity and work ethic so far this year, and I feel that yesterday's news has left more questions than answers. Unfortunately, I have very few answers currently, and obviously I will share any information when I receive it.

If your child is scheduled to sit an exam next week, they should attend school to do so. They will need to continue the same safety processes before entering and during the exam.



We will also continue to prioritise the mental well-being of our young people. We all understand that some children and young people may be experiencing feelings such as anxiety, stress or low mood as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak. If this is the case, then please inform your child's form tutor or contact the online resources below:

- [MindEd](#), a free educational resource from Health Education England on children and young people's mental health
- [Rise Above](#), which aims to build resilience and support good mental health in young people aged 10 to 16
- [Every Mind Matters](#), which includes an online tool and email journey to support everyone to feel more confident in taking action to look after their mental health and wellbeing
- [Bereavement UK](#) and the [Childhood Bereavement Network](#), provide information and resources to support bereaved pupils.

Barnardo's See, Hear, Respond service, provides support to children, young people and their families who aren't currently seeing a social worker or other agency, and who are struggling to cope with the emotional impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19). You can access via the ['See, Hear, Respond' service self-referral webpage](#) or Freephone 0800 151 7015.

It is also vital to report any safeguarding concerns you have about any child. This can be done by emailing Mrs Martindale, our Designated Safeguard Lead. Mrs Martindale can be reached at leah.martindale@sirthomasfremantle.org

Finally, following the announcement last night, we will not be rolling out mass testing until we have clear information about when we can expect all students to return. Once we have this, we will share our programme of testing. We will continue to seek permission from all families to ensure that we are ready to administer the test as soon as we can. I will send regular updates to families and keep you informed should anything change.

Please stay safe and look after yourselves and each other.

Yours faithfully,

Neale Pledger
Headteacher

