31st December 2020

Start of Term - New Update as of 31st December 2020

Dear students/parents/carers

I hope that you and your families have remained well over the Christmas break and that you are taking care of one another and making the most of the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

You will be aware that these circumstances are constantly changing and that the situation regarding COVID Tiers and the impact on schools and colleges is under regular review. We will keep you updated as best as we possibly can via Carmel Connect, the college website and social media and will provide fuller information via parent and student mail.

Following the latest government announcement, I can confirm:

For the week commencing Monday 4th January

• Normal timetable but all lessons online for Lower 6th and Upper 6th students.
• Foundation Learning students will follow their usual timetable in college
• Year 0 students will continue, as planned with their online sessions/timetable
• External exams and controlled assessments will take place at the original scheduled times and college buses will run as normal on exams days (Wednesday & Friday next week)

College will be ‘open’ to staff from the 4th January

For the week commencing Monday 11th January

• Upper 6th students will return to college for face to face lessons - normal timetable
• Lower 6th students will continue to have online lessons - normal timetable.
• BTEC external exams this week will run as planned.
• Foundation Learning (in) and Year 0 students (online) continue as week 1
• College buses will run as planned

From Monday 18th January

• All students will be back in college for face to face lessons - normal timetable
• Year 0 continue online learning

The Mock exams week for both Lower and Upper 6th are now being put back to the week beginning 8th February. This is later than we had planned but will ensure that we maximise the amount of face to face teaching we can offer this half term. We appreciate many students will have been preparing for exams earlier in the term but this will not be wasted work.
COVID-19 Testing

In line with recent government announcements, arrangements are being made for the College to set up its own test centre to test those who do not have symptoms but may unknowingly have the virus. It is very important to emphasise that all of the previous advice still applies and that if students have COVID-19 symptoms, they should not attend College. They should book a test at one of the main testing sites and self-isolate until further notice. They should also keep College up-to-date with reasons for absence and results of COVID tests.

For those students who do not have symptoms and who are attending College, we have been told that we will receive the relevant equipment and testing kits on Monday 4th January. It is our hope that by Monday 11th January we will be able to offer rapid testing for those that want this.

We are planning to offer students the option of a test in the first two-week cycle of lessons between Monday 11th January and Friday 22nd January. Consent is required for the test and a consent form with pre-printed details will be posted to all students during the week beginning 4th January.

Thank you once more for your understanding and your support. My very best wishes to you and your family in keeping safe and continuing to follow the government guidance regarding washing hands frequently, maintaining 2m distancing from others and wearing masks whenever this may not be possible.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Hill
Principal