Dear students, parents and carers

I am glad to report that in terms of college, numbers of Covid infections have continued to significantly decline and we have had just one positive case being reported and only a very small number of staff and students now having self-isolate. Please do continue to inform college if you have a positive test or are self-isolating, even if you are still working from home.

We are now into our third week of Covid testing at college and are carrying out are over 60 tests a week for those staff and students who are coming on to site; this is going really well. We are yet to find a positive case amongst those currently attending college but we are still awaiting further guidance about how testing may be used as part of the wider return to college later this year.

We have had no further updates or guidance as regards to when face to face education may return for the majority of students. There was much speculation in this weekend’s media and I know this is causing anxiety amongst many of you. As we have done throughout the past year we will work as a college and make our own decisions when we feel it is right and safe to invite more students and staff into college.

I have also said that we will give everyone at least 2 weeks’ notice of any change regarding the operation of the college and I am glad to hear the Government give the same promise.

This half term finishes next Friday, 12th February and sessions will finish at 4pm. Whilst college will remain open over the half term week there will be no ‘live’ lessons over the half term holiday. We will recommence online teaching again on Monday 22nd February. Foundation Learning students will also have no lessons over the half term week- again starting the new term on Monday 22nd.

We understand over 100,000 people responded to the public consultation on Summer Exam Grades and over half of the respondents were students. We now await the outcome of this and the formal guidance on how the college will start working with staff and students to work towards this year’s Teacher Assessed Grades. We are expecting this sometime in early March and, as always, I will keep you all updated.

Thursday 4th February - Learning Preparation Day/Student Enrichment Day

As I explained in last week’s update, following feedback and guidance we have received from Ofsted and the DfE re effective online learning we are pausing ‘live’ teaching on Thursday 4th February.

- Students will have been set work for this week and lessons will continue as normal on Friday.
- Year 0 students this is your Assessment week and we will continue as planned throughout the week.
- Foundation Learners will continue to follow their timetable and so all lessons will run as normal all week.
We are inviting all students to find time on Thursday to connect with our Student Wellbeing Day Resources for self-care. There are lots of resources available on Carmel Connect including a presentation by The Lee Cooper Foundation which is a mental health foundation for young people. There is also a dedicated wellbeing page on Connect as well as links to various organisations and helplines. Here are some suggestions to help your physical and mental wellbeing - connect with people, be active, learn new skills, give to others, pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness). Trying these things could help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life.

Apprenticeship Week – just another reminder

Here at Carmel College our Careers Department support all of our students to achieve their Career goals, therefore we are celebrating National Apprenticeship week commencing 8th February. We are updating our Apprenticeship section on Connect (under Careers & Employability) with lots of tips on how and where to search for Apprenticeships, and we will be adding Apprenticeship Vacancies to our Vacancy page when we see them, students can still email careers.team@carmel.ac.uk for a Careers appointment if they need more support! The team will be emailing events out to students in the coming weeks!

There are lots of webinars that you as parents and guardians can register for and learn all about the amazing opportunities Degree Apprenticeships offer your student. Have a look at these options and sign up:

Manchester Metropolitan University Introduction to Degree Apprenticeship Event for Parents and Students: [https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introduction-to-degree-apprenticeships-for-parents-and-guardians-tickets-137816168871utm_source=eventbrite&utm_medium=email&utm_content=follow_notification&utm_campaign=following_published_event&utm_term=Introduction+to+Degree+Apprenticeships+for+Parents+and+Guardians&aff=ebemoffollowpublishemail](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/introduction-to-degree-apprenticeships-for-parents-and-guardians-tickets-137816168871utm_source=eventbrite&utm_medium=email&utm_content=follow_notification&utm_campaign=following_published_event&utm_term=Introduction+to+Degree+Apprenticeships+for+Parents+and+Guardians&aff=ebemoffollowpublishemail)


Amazing Apprenticeships Parents Guide: [https://amazingapprenticeships.com/parents/](https://amazingapprenticeships.com/parents/)

I will do a video update next week as it is the last week of term

Best wishes

Mike Hill
Principal