



25th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that your families are keeping well. The Easter Season began on 12th April and we continue to celebrate the joy of the resurrection which is much needed at this time. The Feast of St. Mark (25th April) falls on Saturday this year and the first reading includes the following reassurance: *"Cast all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you."* (1 Peter 5: 7). Today we would have had special assemblies and celebrations in school with our wonderful students. We miss them very much and encourage you all to pray the School Prayer until the school community can gather together again:

*St Mark,  
Through the grace of God our father,  
You became an evangelist,  
Sharing the good news of Christ.  
May you help us to know him well,  
So that we may faithfully live our lives, as followers of Christ.  
Please hold our community in your care,  
And keep us safe. Amen*

## Home Learning

I sent detailed guidance regarding changes to Home Learning on 3rd April. To summarise:

- **KS3 (students in Year 7 – 9)** are now following a reduced timetable. **This** should take about 3 - 4 hours to complete each day. Students should make use of 'free' time to read, complete other activities such as creative projects, and make use of the Student Wellbeing resources on Google Classroom.
- **Year 10 and Year 12 students** must continue with their GCSE and A Level courses, despite the challenging circumstances. We will continue to monitor the workload of students and they should contact their teachers or Pupil Progress Leader if there are any issues or they require further support.
- **Year 11 and Year 13**  
Teachers have been setting work to enable all students to complete their courses. We will then be providing a range of transition resources to prepare them for the next stage in their learning (e.g. preparation for A Level study). Students will not be sitting examinations and the Exam Boards will decide the final grade based on the school's assessed grades for each subject that your child has been entered for. Information was published by Ofqual on 3rd April, however there is now a consultation process that does not finish until 29th April. We appreciate that this uncertainty is causing anxiety for many students and there are still unanswered questions. We will follow the

official guidance from Ofqual and provide you with updates where possible, including arrangements for GCSE and A Level Results days and Sixth Form Enrolment.

## Support for families during the COVID – 19 crisis

My previous letter included sources of support for families. There are some further updates:

### 1. Free School Meals

If your child is eligible for Free School Meals and you have not received your voucher please contact the school and check that we have your correct email address. It is unfortunate that there have been delays in providing vouchers due to the significant demands on 'Edenred' the government provider.

During the coronavirus pandemic, the government is temporarily extending free school meals eligibility to include some additional groups. Please click on the link below for further information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/guidance-for-the-temporary-extension-of-free-school-meals-eligibility-to-nrpf-groups>

### 2. Government guidance for parents and carers

The following link has extensive information and guidance on a range of issues to support your children at this time:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>

### 3. Online Safety

Please refer to the School Website for a range of important guidance on keeping your child safe online. There is also a new resource leaflet regarding security and apps that young people might be using.

## School Closure

The school has been closed to all staff and students since Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April and will remain closed until Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May. In the current context of social distancing there are risks to staff and students if we re-open the school even for a small number of students, however I am aware that keeping school closed may cause significant difficulties for some families. Parents should email the school by **3.30pm on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> April** if your child is in one of the groups specified by the government and you require school support. Please use the following email address: [staffroom@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk](mailto:staffroom@st-marks.hounslow.sch.uk)

We continue to hold the whole school community in our thoughts and prayers.

Yours faithfully,



Andrea Waugh-Lucas  
**Headteacher**