

BISHOP HEBER HIGH SCHOOL

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Monday, 11th May 2020

Dear parent/students,

I wanted to write to you today after the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday and provide a sense of what the Heber roadmap may look like for us with the information we have to date.

Firstly, on behalf of my colleagues I want to say how enormously grateful we are for your ongoing support since the Monday, 23rd March when the lockdown commenced. It has not been easy for you and I recognise and value the huge commitment you have made to support your child's continued education albeit in a very challenging context over the past seven weeks. It looks set to continue for some weeks if not months ahead. Similarly, I am so pleased with how the staff at Heber have rallied around and supported all of our students but especially the most vulnerable families in our community, as well providing support for the children of key workers throughout the lockdown. All of this, whilst performing their day-to-day teaching commitments remotely, as well as often running their own homes during the lockdown. What I hope now is that we can look to plan how and when we are able to practically and safely open the school more widely in the coming weeks and months ahead and plan for the new 'normal' in a school setting.

As you are aware, we have been calling every child personally over the past two weeks and we will continue to do so until we have reached every student to reassure each other that all's well and to offer further support if needed at this time.

Like most schools, we are trying to support all students remotely and we have taken the decision to give the greatest academic support to those nearest their public examinations (e.g. current Year 10 and Lower Sixth). This is because, undoubtedly, the long-term impact of the Covid-19 lockdown will impact these years the greatest.

At this moment in time, our current thinking based on the information and likely timescales is:

GCSEs, A-levels and BTECs: All staff are currently undertaking an extensive process to establish 'Centre Assessed Grades' for all students for all GCSEs, A-levels and BTECs. There has been a national consultation on the process and some of the information especially regarding BTECs has not been fully finalised; I expect further update in the next few weeks. For GCSEs and A-levels, staff are following the national guidelines in formulating the rank order and centre assessed grades for each qualification as communicated to you previously and found at the link given below. This is a mammoth task as we have over 2,000 GCSEs to establish and almost 400 A-levels. If you would like more information on this please visit the government's website via this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcses-as-and-a-level-awarding-summer-2020>

As previously stated, all grades are confidential and will not be released until 13th August (A-levels) and 20th August (GCSEs). Therefore, please do not contact staff directly. However, if you do have any general enquiries about the Year 11 and 13 qualifications having read the information from Ofqual, we have set up a dedicated e-mail address for these questions at exams2020@heber.org.uk. Please be aware, I have instructed staff to not answer any questions directly with regards to the grading of qualifications so as to ensure we comply with exam board regulations.



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KS3: For those in Years 7 to 9 we will continue to set work to a timetable that we have adapted in response to feedback from students and parents. Once schools open more widely, we will ensure that students review their work set during the closure. Teachers will then plan the necessary support to ensure we bridge any gaps that have naturally occurred during the home-schooling period.

Year 9: It is our intention to inform you of your child's GCSE options shortly ahead of schedule so that we can formally start the GCSEs lessons / projects led by their teachers.

GCSE: Year 10 - During this period of lockdown, Year 10 will continue to be set work for each lesson and we are trialling different ways of teaching remotely. The set work will be appropriate to their GCSE curriculum; this will continue to be set and to receive feedback. Please keep in touch with your teachers if you are starting to fall behind or find the work too challenging – ask for their help. Students' work will be reviewed on their return to school and any gaps in knowledge will be addressed then. It is important that students stay up to date with their work set by their teachers.

Sixth Form: Year 12 - Work will continue to be set for each lesson and we are trialling different ways of teaching remotely. We appreciate that it has been a challenging time for students and thank you for your continued support.

Looking ahead, we are hoping to roll out software utilising Microsoft® Office 365 that is well known to the staff and students. The application is called Microsoft® Teams and it appears to have great potential in supporting home schooling further. Staff are currently looking at how best we may use it to support learning from home in future and we have initiated a number of small scale pilots to trial its possible usage. We hope to update you shortly.

I appreciate that there is a lot of uncertainty at the moment. However, we will do everything we can to keep you updated and connected about our plans as we come through the four remaining 'alert' levels but especially as we enter Step 2 of the Government's plans to emerge from this national crisis after half term.

Best Regards



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