



ST CATHERINE'S COLLEGE

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

24 June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

St Catherine's College Lockdown Update

We continue to live in unique times. Supplies of pasta and toilet rolls have returned to normal, but many aspects of our daily lives remain different. As the country starts to emerge from lockdown, lots of questions are being asked. With this in mind, we thought it would be useful to our community if we answered some of the questions which are asked of schools.

Why does lockdown-learning at St Catherine's College keep changing?

In the early days of lockdown, most work resembled homework tasks. The initial stages of developing support for learning saw teaching voice-overs put onto PowerPoints and the use of short teaching videos. Now, having sourced over fifty webcams (not an easy purchase with current levels of supply and demand); run staff training; and written live-learning protocols, we are rapidly moving the whole school onto live online lessons so that lessons can be as close to normal as possible.

Have live online lessons been a success?

Yes. Staff and pupils are all reporting that they are a huge improvement on independent study. Year 10 have had live lessons for three weeks; year 9 for a fortnight; and years 7 and 8 start next week. Attendance to date has been around 96%.

What is expected of students?

It is important that students attend all their live lessons. If you know in advance that you will not be able to attend a live lesson, please email attendance@stcatherines.college with the date, time and lesson which you will not be able to attend and the reason for this. It is also important that students complete the tasks set in the lesson and check EduLink for any additional work set.

What about access to ICT?

We do not want a digital divide to create a learning divide. We use Microsoft Teams for live lessons. This is supported by most phone and computer systems. There is also a growing number of pupils who come into school each day and join their teachers for the lessons face-to-face.

Has the School remained open?

St Catherine's College was proud to play its role in supporting our local key workers. The School remained open throughout the Easter Holiday and only closed for the bank holidays.

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ST CATHERINE'S
COLLEGE



Combined
Cadet Force



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Preparing students to stand shoulder to shoulder with their peers: locally, nationally and globally.

How is St Catherine's College managing 25% of year 10 returning to school?

We considered getting each student in for one day per week, but the disruption to the consistency of learning for the whole year group would be significant. Therefore, we are open to students who are unable to reliably access online learning and also for subjects with a significant assessed practical component, such as motor vehicle and music, where social distancing can be maintained.

Why are we inviting all students in to see their tutors?

We feel it is important that all students get the opportunity to come into school in small groups to see their tutor so that they can share experiences of lockdown; discuss how they are feeling; and prepare for September.

Why are Scottish schools returning in August?

This is not a Covid response; Scotland has a different academic year. Their summer break always starts at the end of June and their new academic year starts in the third week of August.

Will everyone be back in September?

The Government's current ambition is that all pupils return in September. Whilst we currently share and welcome this ambition, a lot could change between now and then.

In a previous letter to you we wrote that *"we know children only have one chance at their education"* and that we would *"endeavour to provide the very best learning experience that we can"*. This, alongside strong pastoral care, remains our driving force and we are very proud of how the vast majority of our pupils are engaging. If you have any questions, feedback or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. We are very grateful for your continued support. Thank you.

Yours faithfully



S Berhane
Headteacher



N Jewell
Deputy Headteacher



S Thomas
Deputy Headteacher