



4th April 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

As we come to the end of our Spring term and the first two weeks of a very new approach to schooling, I write to thank you for the tremendous support you have offered your children and our school in the face of unprecedented circumstances. We have come a long way in a very short time, and we are learning plenty along the way. Your feedback has been vital in helping us to refine our approach and we continue to work hard to ensure the best possible education we can provide, whatever the evolving parameters.

I want you to know that we recognise the challenges remote learning presents for many families and understand that many of you are balancing your own professional expectations, anxieties and worries with personal responsibilities, including to your children and their education. We have been subjected to a rapid and unimaginable transition in our personal and professional lives, the impact of which is not to be underestimated. It is now therefore, in the interest of our collective well-being that we take time wherever possible over Easter to pause, recalibrate and recharge.

This is a message I have made clear to our St Mary's College staff and so I ask you not to expect work to be set or communications to continue in the way that you might have become used to, over the next two weeks. There will be a new section of the SMC Study platform that will launch ahead of Monday with lots of ideas to engage with as students and families, which I urge everyone to visit. If you have any questions or concerns over the Easter break, please refer to the relevant sections of SMC Study (students), or the website (parents) for information and guidance.

You may have noted that new detail from Ofqual was released this morning in relation to 2020 examination students and allocation of grades. There is much to process and we will update you further in due course. I know that this is an anxious time for those students who were expecting to sit exams this summer and we will work with Ofqual and exam boards to ensure as fair an outcome as possible for all those affected. With respect to Year 10, please note that the current proposal is subject to a consultation and so at this stage there has been no decision made about their inclusion in Summer 2020 arrangements.

I will leave you with a short piece of scripture that came my way through a recent act of kindness. It is from Matthew 11:28 and says, 'Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'.

Rest well this Easter. Take good care of each other and stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Perry - **Head of School**

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