

18th December 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

We have made it to the end of term and what a term it has been! There is no doubting that we all had to quickly adapt to a 'new normal' in September and this impacted on every member of our College community. From year group bubbles, the wearing of face coverings, year group zones, separate teaching areas, designated break and lunch time areas including six separate lunch time servings - the list goes on. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all of you for your support throughout this very challenging period, and to the students who have embraced the change and worked with us in making this as successful as possible.

I am delighted to say that we have managed to deliver the full curriculum offer to all year groups throughout this term, and only a very small number of individuals have tested positive for COVID-19. There have been no outbreaks of coronavirus or year group bubbles that have had to self-isolate. That said, I also understand how difficult it has been for our students having to cope with the extended lockdown and College closure between March and August this year and for those who have missed face-to-face teaching due to self-isolation. I also understand the remote learning provision we have in place cannot be seen as a direct substitute or comparable to teaching and learning in the classroom; however, our remote learning provision has developed significantly throughout this period and offers much-needed continuity for students who can't be in the classroom. A copy of our Remote Education Support Booklet can be found on the College's website.

The current model operated by the College has been, and will remain, subject to ongoing review in the context of the health and safety of our students and staff and compliance with the government's guidelines. We currently have staff and students from Tier 1 and Tier 2 areas, which have remained unchanged following the government's review and subsequent announcement yesterday. The forthcoming Christmas break is likely to be followed by a further extended period of restrictions until such time the transmission rates of COVID-19 subside to what is considered a reasonable and manageable level. This, combined with the rollout of vaccines, may then provide us with the opportunity to relax our model and return to a more normal way of operating.

We received at very late notice yesterday information from the government that the return to school in January will be staggered for all secondary pupils in England. This is to allow schools time to set up a Covid testing scheme (more on this below). **This now means we will operate a blended learning model during the first week of the Spring Term, 4th-8th January 2021:**

- **Monday 4th January 2021 is now a staff INSET day, students are not in College.**
- **From 5th-8th January 2021, only examination year groups (Years 11 and 13) will be in College. All other year groups will have to remain at home and complete remote learning.**

Please find further details in respect of the remote learning arrangements attached with this letter.

The College was also notified this week that rapid-result coronavirus (COVID-19) tests would be made available to schools in the new year to help identify asymptomatic cases and help limit the spread of the virus. This will comprise the weekly testing of staff, and daily testing for those students and staff identified as close contacts of students or workplace colleagues that have tested positive. Testing will be voluntary (and parental consent will be required for students), but those who are eligible for testing will be encouraged to participate to reduce the risk of transmission in the College. We are awaiting further information on how to implement the testing and you will be kept updated on the College's arrangements as we find out more.

I understand this has been a particularly challenging year for our exam year groups. The ongoing uncertainty in respect of the composition of both GCSE and A Level exams in Summer 2021 remains, and the anxiety students may be feeling about the fairness of their grades is totally understandable. Please rest assured I will keep you fully updated on this as further information becomes available, and we will do our utmost to ensure our students receive the grades they deserve.

As we look forward to the festive period, I would like to remind you that as a College we are required to continue supporting the contact tracing system and the Department for Education has asked that you are made aware of the following information:

- Where a student tests positive for COVID-19, having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being at school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace
- For the first 6 days after teaching ends (up until and including Thursday 24rd December), if a student tests positive for COVID-19, having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, please e-mail the College at enquiries@torpoint.cornwall.sch.uk with the details. It is important this information is provided as soon as possible so that we can inform any staff or students who are required to self-isolate as a result
- All other forms of communication into the College will be closed throughout the Christmas holiday period, and there will be no further student contact tracing by the College beyond Thursday 24th December.

Finally, thank you again for your continued support this year. On behalf of all my staff, may I wish you a restful and enjoyable festive period and we look forward to welcoming back our Years 11 and 13 students on Tuesday 5th January, and engaging with all other year groups through remote learning in the period 5th-8th January.

Provision can be put in place for those students identified as vulnerable and children of critical workers if they are unable to stay at home from 5th to the 8th January. If this provision is essential for your child please can you contact the College using the following email by 23rd December: enquiries@torpoint.cornwall.sch.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Plumb', written in a cursive style.

Dr Jeremy Plumb
Headteacher