

12th February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I can't believe we are already halfway through the school year! It certainly hasn't been easy for any of us and I can only hope we all return to school soon. At the time of writing, there is still no word about secondary schools returning, but there is an announcement scheduled for the last Friday of the break. When we have definite dates and a plan for reopening, I will write to you again updating you with all we have done regarding Covid Health & Safety Measures since the school was last open. We'll also do a survey to gauge parental feelings.

GCSE Grades

What we do know at the moment is that schools will again be responsible for determining grades. The difference with last year however, is that there must be evidence of the grade awarded. For example, pupil portfolios which show the level and standard of work produced; evidence from Year 10; test papers using past exams, but only assessing work already covered. It is likely we will moderate this work with local schools to ensure our marking is consistent with other schools.

What the Government does not want to see are assessments based purely on teacher assessment. For this reason it is essential that every Year 11 engages in all lessons when we return, whether that is in school or online. All pupils will have to produce evidence which allows us to make an informed decision with regard to the grade awarded for each subject. A letter will be emailed later today to all Year 11 pupils from Qualification Wales and a copy of this can be found on our website.

Year 8 Guided Choices

Today (Friday 12th) is the deadline for your child to have submitted their Option choices form. All the information regarding the option choices can be found by clicking [HERE](#). The link to the form that your child/you need to complete can be found on the letter emailed to you on 3rd February.

Contact details

If you are reading this, it is likely we will have your up to date contact details, but if anything has changed please let us know. It is very important that we maintain current records especially as the majority of our communication to parents is via text, email or online

Community Support

As many of you may know Eastern High, Rumney Community Support Group and Bethania Church have been working together since the lockdown in March to support families and individuals in need in the Trowbridge, St Mellons and surrounding areas during the pandemic. The aim of the group, called **CAST (Community Action in St Mellons and Trowbridge)** is to provide families with immediate support if they have reached a crisis point in terms of food, fuel, accessing medications etc but also to provide support from a family wellbeing /mental health point of view and spiritual support if needed.

The helpline number is 02920 775934 and the contact email is cast@easternhigh.org.uk, please do get in touch if you need support and please feel free to share this with other families and individuals in the area who may also be in need of support.

CAST are also looking to recruit more volunteers from the community to help support the work that they do. If you are interested please leave a message on the helpline number and someone will call you back.

New Appointments

We have made some changes to our staffing structure in the past few weeks. After half-term Mr Johnson will step down from his role as Gwyrdd House Leader to develop the Digital Competence Framework across the school. This is initially until the end of this academic year and is to ensure staff are fully trained in line with the National Framework requirements. He will also be developing some of our online systems. We have appointed Mr Evans and Ms Nichol as the new House Leaders for Gwyrdd.

In addition to this we are also going to appoint three Assistant House Leader (internal) appointments for the other three Houses until the end of the academic year. This will help us to recover lost ground in terms of pupil progress.

We also anticipate a higher demand for pastoral support when we return and therefore have also advertised vacancies for 4 Higher Level Teaching Assistants.

Finally

I'm ever optimistic and I do see a light at the end of the tunnel. The first steps will be the reopening of schools and I sincerely hope this happens very soon. In the meantime, please do encourage your child(ren) to participate in their online lessons and Learning Family time. And don't forget Mr Evans' challenges each week for the whole community!

We'll be in touch with updates when we return after the half term break, in the meantime I hope you all keep well.

Kind regards

Armando Di-Finizio
Headteacher