

5th January 2021

Dear parents and carers,

I did start yesterday's letter by hoping for a better start to the year... and look how that turned out?!

As the country enters a national lockdown following the Prime Minister's address last night, school is now closed to the vast majority of students and all learning is taking place remotely using ICT.

Only children classed as vulnerable, those with EHCPs, and the children of key workers can attend school where they are supervised as they access their online learning in one of our ICT suites. If you are eligible, and have no alternative support for your child during the day, you may register them by following this link and completing the online form. Unless you hear otherwise, once you complete this form you can send your child into school. Currently all school buses are running as usual and our kitchens are providing a hot meal each day [free for this week only] although packed lunches are, of course, fine too. The school day starts and finishes at the usual times of 8.50am – 3.10pm and students should wear full uniform.

Students in years 7 and above started their online lessons today, following their usual timetables with some slightly amended timings. Years 5 and 6 should start accessing live lessons later this week – their teachers were, up until 8pm last night, preparing to teach the students as normal in their classrooms today and they need a little planning time to adapt.

Students in years 5 and 6 will also follow a slightly amended timetable for their remote learning and this will be shared with parents in a separate letter from Mr Nisbet.

More details and guidance on how to access and get the best from the online lessons can be found on the home learning page on our website <https://www.jcsc.co.uk/home-learning/> along with the email address for our ICT support team who can assist with any issues you may be facing. Furthermore, you will find a copy of our code of conduct and expectations around the use of ICT when learning remotely at the end of this letter. Could you please read it carefully and discuss it with your child so we can be sure that everyone learns effectively and safely.

Michael Gove confirmed this morning that GCSE and A-level examinations have been cancelled this summer. What they are to be replaced with has yet to be announced – rest assured that, as soon as an announcement is made, I will update you and the students. Whatever form of assessment replaces GCSEs and A-levels, it is essential that the students continue to apply themselves fully and to work to the very best of their abilities as, whether alternative tests, centre assessed grades or something entirely different altogether is introduced, our young people need to be absolutely ready for whatever comes their way. I know I can count on them to continue to engage fully with their online learning and to maintain regular contact with their teachers, to ensure they receive the very best outcomes in the summer.

The key message from me to those students in years 11 and 13, and those resitting GCSEs in year 12, is don't worry. We will work with you and make sure you achieve the grades you deserve in the summer, whatever the assessment system. Trust the staff, work with them, and you will be absolutely fine.

The remaining mock exams for year 11 and for sixth form students that had been rescheduled for later this month are now cancelled – or at least postponed until we return later this term and hopefully know what the replacement assessments for GCSE and A-level exams will be. At present there has been no formal announcement regarding whether the SATs will take place for our year 6 students but Cambridge Technical exams are still scheduled to go ahead later this month for some of our older students. We will make a decision on what we feel is right for those vocational students in years 11, 12 and 13 by the end of this week... unless the government decides this for us in the coming days.

Those families who are in receipt of free school meals vouchers should continue to receive them automatically using the HUGGG system via Northumberland County Council. Please let us know if you're having difficulties with this, or any aspect of school life. We recognise that it's tough for us all at the moment with so much change, and we're always happy to help.

Once again, thank you for your support and understanding through such a difficult period. It means so much to the entire staff team at JCSC.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads 'Neil Rodgers'.

Neil Rodgers
Executive Headteacher

Pupil expectation/code of conduct for remote learning

This code of conduct outlines what we expect of pupils during online sessions. Much of this echoes our expectations of pupils in lessons when in school and all of it is designed to help pupils gain the most benefit from online learning

Rules regarding technology:

- I will only use school technology for school purposes as directed by my teacher.
- I will only take part in 'live' streaming if an appropriate adult knows that I am doing it, ideally having a parent/carer in the vicinity.
- I will not reveal my passwords to anyone.
- I will be responsible for my behaviour and actions when using technology (e.g. Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and any other interactive applications), this includes the resources I access and the language I use.
- I will make sure that all my communication with students, teachers or others using technology is responsible and sensible.
- I will not deliberately browse, download, upload or forward material that could be considered offensive or illegal. If I accidentally come across any such material I will report it immediately to my teacher or my parent/carer.
- I will not share resources or videos created by my teachers with anyone who is not a pupil or member of staff at James Calvert Spence College.
- I will not record or take photos of my classmates or teachers during a face-to-face session.
- I will not share any school content on social media platforms
- I understand that when using Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams and other applications provided by the school that my use can be monitored and logged and can be made available to my teachers.
- If audio/video conferencing is used, I understand that this will be recorded by the teacher only in order for this to be forwarded to any pupil who missed the live conferencing.
- I will continue to follow the rules regarding my use of technology as outlined in the school's Pupil Acceptable User Agreement.
- I understand that these rules are designed to help keep me safe and that if they are not followed, school sanctions will be applied and my parent/carer may be contacted.

When participating in a live lesson on Google Classroom or any other video conferencing software, remember that this is an extension of the classroom and you should conduct yourself as you would when on your best behaviour in a classroom.

This includes:

- Be on time for your live lesson
- Be dressed appropriately for learning (e.g. no pyjamas)
- Remain attentive during sessions. When taking part in an online sessions I will make sure that my environment is quiet and free from distractions
- Interact patiently and respectfully with your teachers and peers
- Provide feedback to teachers about your experiences and any relevant suggestions
- Your camera should be switched off
- You will stay muted and only unmute when your teacher gives you permission.
- You MUST NOT record each other's online interactions. This will be done by the teacher.
- Make sure you end the session as soon as the teacher indicates to do so and do not stay in the session after the teacher has left.
- Any deliberate disruption of live lessons will be treated very seriously by school and could result in you being barred from taking part in further live lessons.

Expectations for parents/carers:

- Monitor my child's internet use and check that they are using technology safely
- Check my online protection systems to ensure their time online is as safe as possible
- Check that they understand the task they have been set. If not, I will give help and support where required e.g. direct my child to contact the teacher concerned.
- Make sure my child is sitting comfortably and in the correct position to learn
- Ensure that they have a suitable amount of time away from the screen during the day
- Discuss their work with them after they have completed it