

The De Montfort School

UNLOCKING YOUR CHILD'S POTENTIAL

Four Pools Road, Evesham, Worcestershire, WR11 1DQ | Telephone: 01386 442060



3 April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this letter finds you and your family well during the difficult times we find ourselves in. I would like to thank you for your continued support and patience during the first two weeks of the school closure, as we have all adjusted to the new way of working.

The last two weeks have certainly been a steep learning curve for all of us. Members of staff have had to get used to delivering lesson materials in the virtual world and our students have had to make the significant adjustment of continuing to focus on school work whilst being at home. Several of you have, unexpectedly, been asked to juggle childcare and support with the work sent from school, whilst often trying to do your own job at home. As to be expected, considering the little time that we had to prepare, there have been some teething issues. Rest assured that members of staff are working hard to resolve any issues that have come to light during the first two weeks. Can I ask that you bear with us as we make changes and as we introduce new systems over the coming weeks aimed at ensuring things run as smoothly as possible.

I would like to draw your attention to a number of important messages below:

Learning at home

Members of staff have been setting work for students to access and complete. Information on how to access the work from the different faculties can be accessed using the link below. This page also has other valuable guidance and support. Members of staff are trying where possible to set work when the lessons would normally take place. This is to prevent students being overloaded and give some structure and as much as possible a normal routine. Students should do whatever they can, we do not expect parents to take on the role of a teacher; however, I would ask that you support us by ensuring that your child is accessing and completing the work that has been set. We have been pleased with the numbers of students that have been accessing and completing the work, although we are aware that some have not. Given the situation that we find ourselves in could last for some time, it is essential, as much as possible, that our students continue to make progress in their education.

<https://www.tdms.worcs.sch.uk/index.php?page=genericpage&pageid=48>

A few students have found it difficult to access the on line material that is being set by members of staff:

- If this is due to a technical issue with access to our systems, please ask them to contact our technical team using the email technician@tdms.worcs.sch.uk
- If there are other issues with accessing work that is being delivered on line, please get in touch and we will find a different method of delivering the work
- The best way to contact the school is through the email address contact@tdms.worcs.sch.uk or, alternatively, you can contact us by phone using the main school number 01386 442060
- Please note that this line is not always staffed and we may not be able to answer. Please leave a message as we are checking these on a regular basis and a member of staff will get back in touch.

Headteacher: Guy Nichols BSocSC (Econ), NPQH

www.tdms.worcs.sch.uk | office@tdms.worcs.sch.uk | Sports Centre: 07881 506156



During the Easter holidays, whilst we are staying open for the children of key workers, members of staff will not be setting work, as it is essential that we all have a break. We will resume setting work from Monday 20th April.

Update on the awarding of grades for A level and GCSE courses

I understand that this period of uncertainty is putting a great amount of strain on our Year 13 and 11 students. The latest information that we have is from the advice published by the government and, Ofqual, the organisation that regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England. In its announcement, the government explained that there would be a calculated grade process, which will take into account a range of evidence.

Ofqual issued further clarification on the awarding process for grades for 2020 and announced their plan to release detailed information by Easter 2020. There will be an appeals process if students are not happy with the grade that they are awarded and there will be an opportunity to sit examinations as soon as is reasonably possible after schools have reopened and during the summer of 2021.

It is clear that mock examination results and coursework marks will need to form part of the evidence that teachers use to make predicted grades. **It is therefore extremely important that all students complete the coursework components for all their subjects and ensure that they are submitted to their teachers in good time.**

A list of deadlines and further information can be found on our website, as more information is released we are updating the information page on our website, which can be accessed by following the link below

<https://www.tdms.worcs.sch.uk/index.php?page=genericpage&pageid=49>

Latest information from Ofqual

Today, Friday 3rd April 2020, Ofqual have just published more detailed information on how final grades will be awarded for GCSE, BTEC and A-level courses. Teachers will submit one predicted grade for each student taking their subject, which will factor in coursework and also take into account expected progress from the mock exams. The initial deadline for the submission of marks will be 29th May 2020. More information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcses-as-and-a-level-awarding-summer-2020>

Sixth Form applications

We recently sent out letters to students offering places to study in the Sixth Form and we have been pleased with the large number of students choosing to continue their education at The De Montfort School.

We do need confirmation, preferably by email, to confirm your place for next year. If you have not already done this, can I urge you respond as soon as possible. Students that have confirmed their places will, after Easter, receive further information, which will include our Sixth Form reading list, as well as information about the early start of our A-level and Level 3 BTEC courses in June 2020. If you would like to discuss any option changes or related issues, please contact, Mr Dolan, Deputy Head (Curriculum and Achievement) by email at tdolan@tdms.worcs.sch.uk

Year 8 option choices

Letters have been sent offering provisional confirmation of options choices for September 2020. Please contact Mr Dolan, Mr Ballantine, or Mrs K Jones if you have any queries about the option process.

Year 6 SATS

Year 6 students have put a tremendous amount of effort into their studies this year and we have been very impressed with their progress and want to thank them for all their hard work. I know it has been difficult for them to come to terms with not being to fully demonstrate the improvements they have made due to the cancellation of SATS. However, the work they do in the next term is important for ensuring they are prepared for Year 7. Please contact the Year 6 staff members by email if you need any support with the work that has been set.

Free School Meals Provision

For the last two weeks, we have delivered hampers to the homes of children who are eligible for free school meals. We have been informed by our catering suppliers that this has now ceased and the last deliveries were on the 31st March. I would like to thank our catering staff who have worked extremely hard to support families during this time. We have now received the information about the national voucher scheme and we will be issuing vouchers after the Easter holiday break - more information will follow on the administration of the scheme, but in most cases the vouchers will be digital and to the value of £15 per week per child. These can be redeemed at supermarkets, such as Morrison's, Tesco and Asda.

Mental Health, Wellbeing and Welfare

I am aware that students and families have been under additional strain during the last few weeks and naturally some individuals will have really struggled with the changes and stresses of the situation. Mrs Lovecy, our Designated Safeguarding Lead, has sent out a number of documents to support families and provide information and guidance. This week a further guide for supporting mental health will be shared, and for Year 6 and 11 students, a practical support activity will also be sent. Members of the Safeguarding Team will be continuing to work over the Easter holidays. Students or parents please contact them if support is needed:

Mrs Lovecy – flovecy@tdms.worcs.sch.uk 07547 329838 (school hours)

Mrs Wells – swells@tdms.worcs.sch.uk 07522 900 736 (school hours)

Mrs Green – sgreen@tdms.worcs.sch.uk

Organised trips and visits

We had several trips and visits organised for the rest of the academic year, but, as you would expect, these will no longer take place. At the moment we are going through the process of cancelling trips and liaising with companies over refunds, which in the current climate can be a lengthy process. We can only begin to deal with refunds to parents and carers once we have received the credits from the venues. We are dealing with refunds as quickly as we can, so thank you for your patience at this difficult time.

I have detailed a summary of the current refund process for all of the trips and visits below:

Big Bang – refunds currently being processed
Voice in a Million – postponed, so no refunds
Malvern, Psychology Revision trip – cancelled
Valencia – claim currently with the Insurance Company, more details to follow
An Inspector Calls - cancelled
Playbox Theatre, Warwick - cancelled
Year 11 Prom – more details to follow
West Midlands Safari Park - cancelled
Drayton Manor Park - cancelled
Thorpe Park - cancelled
Blackwell Court – more details to follow
Camps International – more details to follow

Although we have achieved a lot over the past two weeks, we don't underestimate the challenges that will lie ahead. However, I am sure that with your continued support, we will be able to overcome them. I am sure you would join me in thanking all of our staff, teachers and support staff, who have all played essential roles to enable us to continue to support your child. I wish you a safe and healthy break over Easter,

Yours,



Guy Nichols