

EBE/sr

20<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear Year Ten,

I hope you had a lovely Easter break and that this letter finds you and your families safe and well. I cannot underestimate the mix of emotions you are all feeling about the current situation. There's no doubt that you must miss your friends and interestingly, quite a few of you have admitted to us that you really do miss school and your teachers!

I wanted to write personally to you all to say it is really important that you try your best to complete the work set by your teachers each week. We do know how difficult working at home can be. Many staff find working at home a challenge especially if you have a busy household and not always a quiet place to study. We know that the situation we all face is far from ideal but we do have to try to make the best of it. Your GCSE exams are approximately 40 school weeks away. Whilst you have only actually missed 10 school days, we know the impact absence can have on student outcomes. You are all faced in an unprecedented situation where the expectation could still be to sit the exams next year as planned with no changes to the curriculum or exam timings or content. Therefore, we are going to have to work really hard to ensure you are supported effectively.

The Senior Leadership Team will be calling each and every one of you over the next two weeks to check in and see how the work is going. It is really important you are honest with us about difficulties you may be facing so we can help you find solutions. We have provided work packs to many of you who haven't been able to access a computer. However, by this week, you should all have a computer you can access. We will be distributing some of the school systems to a few of you without the resource.

I have always said what a remarkable year group you are and how I felt so lucky starting as a Headteacher with you all as our Year 7. I promise you all that we will do our utmost to support you from a distance for now and more intensively when we return to school. We just need you to do your very best now to keep engaged with learning so you don't have a big mountain to climb or barrier to hurdle on your eventual return. Remember there is now very little left of your school education and you will shortly be making choices about your Post Sixteen destination. If you haven't already, take this opportunity to explore the courses that Post Sixteen colleges and schools with sixth forms offer you. You control your future and you can choose what you want to do. However, you will need to ensure you get the grades for the courses and secure good references from us as your current school.

If you do have any concerns or questions, use the [talktous@willingdonschool.org.uk](mailto:talktous@willingdonschool.org.uk) or [talk2us@willingdonschool.org.uk](mailto:talk2us@willingdonschool.org.uk) email. We know many students are facing anxiety over this situation and please be reassured, many adults are too. We will get through it and the school will be waiting for you when we can open safely.

Finally, we will be in touch about the process for head girl, boy and senior prefect team.

Keep safe, look after yourselves and your families, don't give your parents/carers too hard a time if they try to get you to work! Remember, we all want the very best for you.

Best wishes,

Ms Beer  
**Headteacher**

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