



# THE GRANGE SCHOOL

*Mr V Murray – Headteacher*

15 January 2021

Dear Parents, Carers, and Students

I hope you are all safe and well and coping with the demands of the current lockdown, whether that is continuing from your place of work, or working from home. It continues to be a time of constant change and demand but with the roll out of the vaccines, we live in hope that those most at risk can soon be better protected.

I thought that you might welcome an update on matters relating to school and what we are engaged in during this period of partial closure under the headings of:

- Mini-school setting (provision for children of key workers and vulnerable students)
- Remote Education
- BTEC Examinations on site
- COVID Testing on site
- Laptops and Connectivity
- Free School Meals

## **Mini-School**

Numbers have been fairly stable within our 'mini-school' setting this week and we expect more students in school next week, which is already planned and prepared for. I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to our staff who are supporting and keeping our key worker and more vulnerable students in school and focused upon their remote learning. Our Support for Learning team, who are the back-bone of our provision, alongside our Cover Teachers, are doing a great job, which enables our teachers to focus upon remote education.

## **Remote Education**

Over the course of this week, we have received a number of documents in school, both from the DFE (Department for Education) and OFSTED, relating to Remote Education and I believe the school's Remote Learning Policy serves the needs of our students, these documents and the expectations of both the DFE and OFSTED well.

[School Policies - The Grange School](#)

Thank you for the supportive comments that we have received to date, as this is an area of working that we are constantly developing and reviewing. Our teachers are actively engaged in developing their skills and although we are not all in school, what works well is shared across our staff forums.

## **BTEC Examinations on site**

We have managed to support students through their exams since the start of term and my thanks to the examinations team for successfully delivering a safe environment in challenging times and to those members of our staff who have stepped forward to invigilate. The desire from the students to take their exams is reflected in the high turn out and take up of the exams. Steps are in place to mitigate risks of spread of infection as best we can and students have been able to complete their exams rather than cancelling what they had been working towards.

As I write, we await the consultation in relation to how we award grades for students this year. There has been comment in the news and media as to what we might expect but we await the content of the OFQUAL consultation. I remain hopeful that this will include some form of assessment that includes external moderation. There has to be an integrity to the process, with an element of external accountability and scrutiny.

## **COVID Testing on site**

At the point of partial closure, we were working towards COVID testing for all staff and the phased return of all of our students. Mr Beveridge, our school's Business Manager, has worked tirelessly to deliver a field COVID Testing Centre which is currently operational within the Sports Hall. There are currently three testing bays up and running this week, testing both staff and students. The process is working and we will concentrate on scaling this up in readiness for the return of all students. To date, we do not have any information as to when this might be.

Again, our staff who have been involved in registering those being tested, assisting staff and students in their testing, processing the tests and recording the results have been fantastic. Their 'can do' attitude and reassurance for those being tested has been truly outstanding.

### **Laptops and Connectivity**

The school has also been busy throughout the last two weeks determining who needs laptops and connectivity in order to access remote education. The IT team have been busy responding to requests for support and enabling the laptops for distribution, whilst Mr Netley is busy identifying where the need lies and arranging for the collection of devices. The prepping of the devices has been an impressive sight.

If your son or daughter does not have access to a device that will access their remote education, please let us know. Mr Netley has prepared a form to complete that will enable us to prioritise the delivery of devices we have in school.

[Form - limited access to IT equipment or WIFI at home.](#)

### **Free School Meals**

For those of you who are in receipt of free school meals, you will receive communication to access and reclaim Tesco Vouchers for both this week and last. We are informed that the Government scheme, through *Edenred*, will be up and running from next week, whereby you will be able to access vouchers to a wider range of supermarkets. In the meantime, if you encounter any problems accessing the Tesco vouchers, please ensure to contact us at school.

I end as I started with the spirit of hope and the words of G. K. Chesterton, *'there is one thing which gives radiance to everything. It is the idea of something around the corner'*. Whilst we are waiting for the corner to arrive, if your child is experiencing any difficulties during this time, please let us know.

Take care.

Yours faithfully



**Vince Murray**  
**Headteacher**