



Mr G Panayiotou – Headteacher
Mr John McNichol – Chair of Governors

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Our Ref: GP/NF

5th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Following the Prime Minister's announcement last night, the academy is now closed (other than to children of key workers and vulnerable pupils) and learning will take place remotely. The government have indicated that this will be the case until at least the middle of February. Although we are very disappointed that the academy will be closed (especially following such a successful return in September), we understand that this is necessary to reduce the transmission of the new variant of coronavirus in the community and ultimately save lives.

Although, we do not have all of the information at this point, we wanted to write and update you about some of the plans for this half term.

Remote Learning

All pupils should now access remote learning using Show My Homework. Teachers will be setting lessons using SMHW and Screencastify. If your child has forgotten their login for SMHW, please remind them that it is the username and password that they use to log into the computer at school. Please see the links below for further guidance on using SMHW and Screencastify:

SMHW:<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gnHrkxZe8uIx5Z0U8n0jAlseSNmULq6/view>

Screencastify:<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u50fpln4wp7yhl3a5jBqAMiQkQyHvj4/view?usp=sharing>

What is Screencastify?

Screencastify is a tool that teachers use to record their lesson. It allows teachers to talk over the PowerPoint or resources that they would use to teach a lesson and to share this with pupils. The benefit of using Screencastify is that pupils are able to access the lessons at any time so if they need to share devices with a sibling, or miss a lesson, it is always there for them to go back to watch. It is also very useful for revision.

How much work should my child be doing?

The government recommend that secondary school pupils should complete at least 4 hours of learning per day. To support pupils with their organisation, lessons will be published daily. Pupils should follow their normal timetable, the title of each of the assignments will indicate which lesson of the day they usually take place (e.g. History Thursday 7th January Period 1). This should help your child to follow their timetable for that day.

Teachers will be clear about what work should be submitted each week, this should be done over SMHW or by using a school e-mail address. Feedback will be given on an individual or whole class level to ensure that pupils are making progress over this period of lockdown.

What if I do not have a device or data to access SMHW?

If you require any support with devices or accessing the internet, please contact admin@castlefordacademy.com

Year 11 and 13 Exams

The government announced that exams for Year 11 and Year 13 will not go ahead in their current format. We have not had any further information at this point on how exam groups will be assessed. It is important that pupils continue to complete all of the work set by their teachers as this might be used in the future to support assessment processes.

Year 11 Mock Exam Results

Year 11 reports and mock exam results will be posted home at the end of next week. In the circumstances, we are in a very fortunate position in that (by limiting in school contact between exams) almost all pupils have been able to complete a full set of mock exams without any pupils needing to self-isolate due to in school transmission. This means that teachers have a really secure understanding of what pupils know and how to fill any gaps in knowledge, this may support any future requests for teachers to provide evidence of achievement.

Please note that the Year 11 report and mock exam data are not necessarily the final results that your child will achieve in their GCSEs. We are awaiting clarification on how pupils in Year 11 will be assessed. All pupils should continue to complete work as normal. We will share more information about how pupils will be assessed as soon as we receive updated guidance.

Year 11 and 12 BTEC Exams

The government have said that the exams planned this week will go ahead as normal. Due to the updated government guidance about staying at home, we have made some adjustments to our planned revision sessions.

Year 11 Construction – pupils should now attend for a pre-exam booster on **Thursday 7th January** at **8.45am** in the Sports' Hall followed by their exam. Please arrive at the Sports' Hall doors at 8.45am in full school uniform.

Year 12 Health and Social Care - revision sessions will now take place online over Microsoft Teams. Pupils should arrive at main reception at 11am on **Friday 8th January** for a pre-exam booster prior to their exam at 12.30pm.

Safeguarding Pupils On-line

Following the recent move to remote learning, we have some advice for pupils and their families to stay safe online.

Pupils should only contact teachers and staff at the school through a school email address. A personal email address should not be used to make contact. Any communication from teachers will only be sent through a school email address and through Show My homework. This will help pupils to identify trusted adults and ensure they do not respond to other unknown email addresses.

If you are concerned that your child has had any communication from a non-trusted adult or you are concerned about any other online activity, this can be reported to CEOP using the following website: parentinfo.org. This also includes information about age limits for social media sites, how to report a concern, safety and settings amongst other things and is a very useful website for parents and carers to refer to.

Information has been delivered to all pupils about how to stay safe online and this includes social media. Please note that the same standard of behaviour and expectations apply to remote learning as they would in school.



This includes the importance of respect to others. Pupils should not share links with other children. Pupils are also reminded never to share personal information online in any forum or social media site.

We have a designated safeguarding lead in school every day. If you wish to report a concern about a child, please contact reception in the usual way on 01977 605060. If you think a child is at risk of immediate harm, please contact the police.

We understand that we have shared a lot of information in this letter. If you have any questions, please contact admin@castlefordacademy.com. We will continue to send weekly updates to parents throughout the lockdown period.

We look forward to welcoming pupils back soon, in the meantime, please stay safe.

Yours faithfully



Mr G Panayiotou
Headteacher

Yours faithfully



Mrs D Cook
Associate Headteacher

