



# WESTCLIFF HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

An Academy Grammar School  
Headteacher: Dr Paul Hayman BSc



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1<sup>st</sup> April 2020



Dear Parents and Carers,



Science

We are reaching the end of the second week of school closures, and hope that you and your family remain well.

This time is proving to be a significant period of adjustment for staff, pupils and parents/carers, and your understanding of this is hugely appreciated by the staff.



Engineering

### **Pupils needing to be in school during the Easter Break**

You will have received a SchoolComms about registering your child to be in school during the Easter Break.

School will be open for these pupils from 8am to 3.30pm, but no food or drink will be available (other than water) so they will need to bring a snack and a packed lunch.

We have asked parents to provide contact details for those attending school; if your child is under the care of another adult please ensure we have their telephone number(s) and email address(es) as well.



It is possible that during the break the demands on Key Workers will increase. Should it then become necessary to send your child to school, please email [generalenquiries@whsg.info](mailto:generalenquiries@whsg.info) so we can make the necessary arrangements.



Southend-on-Sea

### Pupils needing to be in school week commencing 20<sup>th</sup> April

There will be a SchoolComms sent out to parents the previous week so pupils can be registered for this.



### **Communication**

Every pupil has been given access to Office365 and through this can see their school emails using Outlook. We are aware that some pupils are not looking at these emails. They must do so as some messages about school work are sent this way as well as other communications, for example from their Learning Managers. An App for Office 365 can be downloaded on any smartphone, and this will also make Outlook available. Please ensure your child is checking emails from school either on a computer or on their smartphone every morning and afternoon.



### Contact with Vulnerable Pupils

As required, we are trying to make contact with vulnerable pupils on a regular basis, but our Pastoral Staff are not getting a response from some parents. Please be aware that we have a duty to maintain this contact, and should parents not respond we may have to involve other agencies.

### Regular Contact with all Parents and Pupils

We are being requested by the DfE to make regular contact with every pupil in our school to ensure they remain well, there are no issues of concern and they are able to undertake the work set.

After Easter a member of staff will telephone home to speak to a parent just to ask if everything is ok. They will also ask to speak to the pupil so they can remind them of who to contact should any difficulties occur.

The call may come from a member of staff who is not known to you, and because they are working from home their telephone number will be withheld. In advance of the call we will send you an email with the name of the staff member who will call. They will not ask for any personal details, but should introduce themselves.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this.

### Emailing Staff

During this period away from school it will not always be possible for staff to respond to emails in a timely fashion. Please can I ask for your forbearance, but should a matter become urgent please then email the Learning Manager or our Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Bain, or myself.

## **Pupils Working at Home**

### Exercise Books Returned to Pupils

Over the past week we have emptied every locker in the main building. As a result we have posted home any exercise books and the contents of folders to the pupils concerned. These parcels should be arriving through the post.

### Work not Being Completed/Returned

Some work has not been returned to teachers despite requests.

Please can you ensure you are monitoring the work undertaken by your child and ensuring work is returned as requested.

Some pupils may have difficulty returning paper based work, but this can be photographed or converted into a pdf and emailed to the staff concerned through the school's email system.

### Managing Workload

A few parents have contacted us to say their child is spending too long on work set. This should not happen. We know some pupils are determined to get everything right or want their work to be perfect; however much they want this to be the case, they should only need to spend 40 minutes on most work and not spend more than 1 hour on any set lesson. Please can you monitor this and email the teacher who set the work if it is taking longer than this; it is possible they have set some work of an open ended nature beyond a core piece of work, and this can lead to pupils feeling that everything has to be completed.

We have asked teachers to start setting time limits for each piece of work and, recognising that the work is taking longer than expected, I have requested that, for now, homework other than revision is not set (though this may not come into effect until next term).

Please also email your child's Learning Manager if this re-occurs.

### Work Over the Easter Break

In the interests of managing staff workload and ensuring pupils do not feel 'snowed under', I am asking staff not to set any significant pieces of work during the Easter break, as would be the case if the school

had not been closed. This should give pupils time to complete any outstanding work and, where appropriate, undertake revision activities.

## **Grades for GCSE and GCE Examinations**

### Year 11 Forecast Grades

We have had no information yet on what we will be asked to provide. Staff have been reviewing the attainment of pupils in Year 11 over a period of time, so these grades can be submitted knowing there is a strong evidence base behind them.

### Year 13 Forecast Grades

Again, we have had no information yet on what we will be asked to provide. Again, staff have been reviewing the attainment of pupils in Year 13 over a period of time, so these grades can be submitted knowing there is a strong evidence base behind them.

In many cases, these grades will not be the same as the UCAS predictions made last September; UCAS predictions are aspirational and the final submitted grade may be higher or lower than this. In every case, staff will have strong evidence to support their judgements.

We are also waiting to hear how appeals against grades will be handled, and will update parents and students on all this as information becomes available.

### Re-sits?

Without wishing to forecast a disappointing outcome, it is important that every student in Year 11 and Year 13 retains their notes and revision materials in case they choose to re-sit an examination.

### New Work Submitted by Year 11 and Year 13 Students

I am aware that some students have been sending extra work to staff hoping for this to show why they may qualify for a higher predicted grade this summer.

To manage everyone's workload I am asking that, except with the prior agreement of the member of staff, no new work can be submitted to staff after April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020.

After this time, students should only be working on past papers for revision purposes, or reading from the reading lists, which have been posted the school website under Curriculum, Next Steps.

## **Pre-University Tests**

All of the pre-university tests (BMAT, TMUA, MAT, GAT, HAT etc) are taken in October, but STEP examinations are normally taken in June. No decision has been made as to whether these tests will take place.

## **Importance of School Examinations**

Next term Years 7-9 and Year 12 will be taking end of year examinations.

I must stress the need for these to be taken under the correct conditions, and for the results to be a fair reflection of your child's learning:

- Pupils must be supervised.
- Pupils must not be disturbed.
- Pupils must not have access to books/internet/mobile phones etc.
- Pupils must only take the time allowed for the exam even if it means leaving it unfinished.
- Exams must be submitted to the teacher concerned within 24 hours.

We recognise that this will be hard to achieve, and students in Year 12 should know that if we feel their outcome does not reflect their work this year, we may choose to reassess them when we return to school to ensure decisions about transition into Year 13 are valid.

Please note that pupils with access arrangements will be contacted by Mrs Dell about the time allowance or other support that may be needed for these examinations.

### Year 9 Examinations

The Year 9 examinations will commence on Friday 24 April and finish on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> May.

Staff are currently developing new assessments to meet the challenge of providing these examinations under our present conditions.

There will be no more than three examinations per day with most being 60 minutes or less in duration, and they should take place within three 3 hour slots shown - please see the timetable for detail.

All examinations will be delivered to students via Google Classroom and they will complete their work as directed by the examination. Most will require answers to be entered directly into an answer form online but some may require pen, paper and a photograph of work submitted through Google classroom.

### **Year 9 Examination Timetable**

Date	<u>08:30 to 11:30</u>	Break	<u>11:30 to 2:30</u>	Lunch	<u>2:30 to 4:30</u>
24 April 2020	Business		French Writing		Drama
27 April 2020	English		French Listening&Reading		Computing
28 April 2020	Geography		Spanish Listening&Reading		Chemistry
29 April 2020	D&T Engineering		History		Maths
30 April 2020	Food Art		Music		Biology
01 May 2020	RS		Spanish Writing		Physics

**During this period of time away from school we do not want pupils to miss out on other aspects of the guidance we provide.**

### Careers Guidance

Details about careers guidance and opportunities are available on the school website.

Next term we would expect to spend a significant amount of time with Year 12 preparing them for their Higher Education applications or their steps into apprenticeships/work. Details of how we will cover this work will be sent out next term.

### PSHE

Work related to our PSHE curriculum is uploaded to Google Classroom. These activities should form part of the normal lesson routine while at home.

### Wellbeing

During these challenging times we are aware that everyone's wellbeing is going to be challenged.

To maintain our well-being we all need a routine to our day: work/ rest and exercise. I hope everyone is managing to achieve this balance.

Where possible students should be helping around the house, and making contact with other relatives through 'Skype' etc. They could also be looking out for any neighbours who are on their own.

To support pupils and parents we have placed a number of materials on the school website under the 'Curriculum' tab. Please refer to these, and we will be adding further materials over time.

Our creative subjects are also setting a range of work and activities for the pupils to do when they would have had these lessons. These should also form part of each pupil's normal timetable and help to ensure they maintain a balance in their work.

You will know that a significant factor in our pupils' wellbeing is the influence of social media. Please can I ask that you are checking your child's use of social media as they may be spending more time on this than is necessary. Further information about this will be placed on the safeguarding and wellbeing sections of the website.

### Keeping Well

Please can we reinforce the usual messages about avoiding the transmission of Covid-19.

Where possible we should stay at home, hands should be thoroughly washed on a regular basis (the advice is now at least every 2 hours) and please refer to the Public Health England website for the most up-to-date guidance and possible symptoms.

### **Other Matters**

#### Timetable Changes

A few pupils will have modifications to their timetable next term. Details will be emailed out to those affected.

#### Contact Numbers

Please can we ask parents to check and update contact telephone numbers and email addresses that we hold. You should be able to do this through 'MyChildAtSchool' – the same portal that you use to access PT data.

#### PPE Equipment Donated

You may have seen in the media about schools being requested to donate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to local hospitals and surgery's. We have donated the CSI equipment that we use for one of our Activity Days to Southend Hospital; we will write more about this in a Newsletter home.

#### Year 11 & Year 13 Book Return

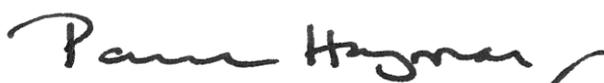
At some point we hope to hold a 'Book Return Day' for Year 11 and Year 13 students to bring their text books back that have been loaned to them by the school and therefore avoid you receiving a bill for lost materials. This will not happen in the usual way, but we will set a date on our return to school for this to occur.

#### Reading Lists Year 11 and Year 13

We have now gathered information from staff to create reading lists for Year 11 and Year 13 students. These will be posted on the school website under the 'Curriculum' tab. Students should use these resources to help to prepare them for the subjects that they wish to follow in their next stage of education, therefore they are not expected to complete this for all of the subjects that they have currently been studying.

As I come to the end of a long letter, I would like to wish you a happy and restful time this Easter; I suspect we will all find this difficult to achieve, but I wish you well.

Yours sincerely



Dr Paul Hayman  
**Headteacher**