



Queen Mary's Grammar School

Headmaster: R J Langton, M A

19th March 2020

School closure and next steps – a letter to all Year 11 and Year 13 students

Dear student,

I have today written to all parents to explain how Queen Mary's is approaching Wednesday's announcement from Gavin Williamson, the Secretary of State for Education, mandating the closure of schools in England from Friday 20th March. This means that the school shall not be open for you from Monday 23rd March. I wanted to write to you, as a member of the cohort that is most affected by the government's announcement that GCSE and A Level exams are cancelled, to reassure you that Queen Mary's will support every last one of you in your next steps through education and beyond.

I know that this is an uncertain time for you. You will undoubtedly have many questions about the next stages in your education, many of which we don't have the answers to at this stage. We are here to support you now and in the future and will continue to liaise with UCAS, the DfE, Ofqual and the exam boards to make sure we are informed and you are dealt with fairly. Rest assured, your futures are at the forefront of our priorities.

All of your teachers have worked extremely hard to set up remote learning opportunities with the aim of preparing you to sit those exams that have now been cancelled. During this enforced closure, we will be exploring ways to create more opportunities for Year 11 students to continue study towards A-levels or for Year 13 students to prepare for university. However, the message is clear: you have to continue on the path you were on. GCSEs and A-levels are the natural preparation for the next steps. Routine, study and academic curiosity have to continue in order to set firm foundations. In any other year, the intense revision that would have been taking place in preparation for exams provides the bedrock of learning for A level or degree study. You should complete the course, even if those exams have been taken away.

At Queen Mary's, we have always strived to embed in all students a sense of community; that we can achieve great things when we work together. It is cruel that, at the very moment we need to draw upon that Marian spirit, we are forced to spend an indefinite time apart. You will undoubtedly miss your friends, teachers and support staff. Staff will miss you too. We rely upon each other for challenge, humour and routine. Rest assured that Queen Mary's will support you in other ways, beyond the academic, over the coming months and for a long time after that. If you feel vulnerable, need some advice on academic matters, or simply want to make contact over the coming weeks our general email address is: enquiries@qmgs.walsall.sch.uk. That address will be checked and someone **will** get back to you.

Society needs people like you: intelligent, generous and innovative individuals that can act in support of others beyond the Queen Mary's community. I am proud of all of you and I urge you to look after yourselves, your families and friends and everyone else around you. You have a hugely important role to play as we face the challenges ahead.

We look forward to opportunities to celebrate together in the future; to mark your time in the school in an appropriate and memorable way. But for now, stay safe and healthy and know that Queen Mary's is with you every step of the way.

Yours sincerely

Richard Langton
Headteacher