



8 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

### Coronavirus and Exams Update

I hope this finds you and your family safe and well and trust that you are coping during the lockdown. The 'Beast From The East' seems to be the next challenge facing us although that does seem, at least, to have an end in sight!

In school our Keyworker Provision continues to be busy - thank you to all parents and carers who are ensuring that we have accurate lists for safeguarding and staffing purposes by booking in using the link which is emailed weekly. If you believe that your child requires a place in this provision, please email [news@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:news@gps.hlt.academy) in the first instance so that we can respond to your query. In line with DfE guidance, school is **closed** over the half term break, closing on **Friday 12 February** and the provision will reopen on **Monday 22 February**.

We are pleased with the number of students who are now engaging in online learning through the Google Classroom platform on an hourly and daily basis. Wherever possible, students should aim to follow their school timetable as this will give the best access to teaching staff through live lessons, lessons in the Google Stream and support for any queries. I understand that on occasions students may need to catch up with a lesson at a later date and live lessons particularly can be difficult to recapture after the event. Therefore, a new consent form for live lessons has been produced and I would be delighted if you could fill this in immediately:

<https://forms.gle/8TmsreYDNFxEWMXx8>

The new consent form allows teachers to upload recordings of the lesson to the Google Classroom so that students who have to miss a lesson are able to watch the recording later. Where a teacher has requested it, this also allows students to turn their cameras on which is incredibly useful for some practical subjects. Your help in completing this form quickly would be appreciated.

Cont'd ...

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I appreciate that is a particularly challenging and confusing time for our Year 11 students. The consultation about the replacement for the full series of exams has now concluded but we have not yet been made aware of how grades will be assessed this summer. I would like to reiterate my previous message - it is vital that Year 11 students complete all timetabled lessons through the Google Classroom platform and hand in all tasks as these will support the final preparations for the evidence base for teacher assessed grades. If your Year 11 child is not engaging in online learning, we will be in touch to suggest a place in school. If you have any queries or questions about Year 11, please contact the Head of Year Mr Gadd on [m.gadd@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:m.gadd@gps.hlt.academy)

As part of the Department for Education's strategy for remote education, we have begun to issue weekly tracking of your child's engagement in online learning; I hope you have received our initial emails and that you are finding these useful. My own child is in Year 7 and I know that when we get emails from his school about incomplete or missing work, it helps us have an informed conversation about what might have gone wrong. On many occasions, as we all get to grips with new technology, a task might have been handed in using the wrong format or, most often, not submitted after completion. There are some useful hints for students here about common errors to avoid: <http://georgepindarschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/How-to-hand-in-work-correctly-Student-Version.pdf> If you have any queries about online learning, please direct these to [news@gps.hlt.academy](mailto:news@gps.hlt.academy) in the first instance.

As we approach half term, I would like to thank all members of the school community for your support during these difficult times. We really appreciate the messages we have received in school and we have enjoyed talking to parents, carers and students on the phone. I understand that it is extremely challenging to balance work, online learning and family life and appreciate everything you are doing to help your child succeed. I hope you all enjoy screen-free time over the half term break and look forward to 'seeing' your child in virtual lessons on Monday 22 February.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads 'LWelsh'.

Lesley Welsh  
**Principal**