

Dear Parent/Guardian

I trust this letter finds you well and that you managed to enjoy Easter, as best as possible. Welcome back to the start of a new term and it is imperative that all pupils now re-engage with the online learning resources provided by the school. If you have any difficulties accessing the information please contact the school via email (info@banbridgeacademy.banbridge.ni.sch.uk).

Years 8-11 materials will continue until the end of the summer term.

Year 12 will soon, if not already, complete their specifications. Pupils should then take the opportunity to research future career options, read around their chosen A Level subjects and complete past GCSE papers in those subjects in order to ensure the best possible preparation for future study.

Year 13 will soon, if not already, complete their specifications. Pupils should then take the opportunity to research future career options and complete past AS papers in the subjects they intend to study at A2 in order to ensure the best possible preparation for A2 study. In some subjects you will start the A2 course and in others you will consolidate the AS learning to ensure the best possible preparation for A2 study.

Year 14 as previously advised should utilise the time to research their chosen careers and prepare for the next stage in their educational journey and career.

As I highlighted in my previous communication, I will continue to ensure that as a school we will support your son/daughter throughout this difficult time. Please do not hesitate to contact the school via email (info@banbridgeacademy.banbridge.ni.sch.uk) if you require support or advice. Please note safeguarding issues will be dealt with as a matter of urgency, these and other significant pastoral issues may be addressed by directly emailing Mrs Evans, hevans230@c2ken.net.

The Minister of Education has recently launched the Department of Education's app on the Safer Schools platform which has been provided by iNEQE Safeguarding Group. The app, downloaded on either the App Store or Google Play, can be accessed via the following link

<https://ineqe.com/safer-schools-ni/>

The mental health of our pupils is paramount and the continuation of emotional support is essential for young people during these extraordinary times. All parents should note that there are a number of materials on the school website (Parental Information – Letters Home) which will help our pupils and indeed parents during this extremely challenging time. These materials include Internet Safety, Supporting Pupils with SEN, Useful Support Contacts and Mental Health Advice and Guidance. The Independent Counselling Service for Schools is providing counselling sessions for young people via telephone and online video. 'Drop-in' support is also available via telephone. Please contact Mrs Evans directly, hevans230@c2ken.net, if you wish to arrange a referral.

Understandably, there is a great deal of anxiety and concern amongst our pupils and our parents regarding how grades will be awarded in GCSE, AS and A Levels in the summer. CCEA and Ofqual (relevant to qualifications that are non-CCEA Examinations i.e. a small number of subjects in the Academy, which are offered by Examination Bodies on the mainland) have now published details of how grades for GCSE, AS and A Level exams are to be awarded this summer – all available directly on the school website - <http://www.banbridgeacademy.org.uk/parental-information-3/letters-home/>. I tweeted the links to the detailed statements, from the school account and after considering the guidance drafted a summary, which is available in the Parent Information, Letters Home section of the school website:

'Summary on how GCSE, AS and A Levels will be graded and awarded in summer 2020'

I know that this is an extremely challenging time for you and your family but please be assured that teachers are aware of the academic potential of your son/daughter and the school will work tirelessly to ensure that pupils achieve the outcomes that they deserve.

Finally, I thank you as parents for your tremendous support. My thoughts and prayers are with our pupils, parents, colleagues and everyone in our community.

Please take care.

R S McLoughlin
Principal