



# Bishop Vaughan Catholic School

March 31<sup>st</sup> 2020

Dear all

I hope that this letter finds you and your families well during these unprecedented and difficult times. As I have highlighted previously the wellbeing of the learners in our school community remains a key priority for us during this time of closure and I am now in a position to provide an update for **Year 10 and Year 12 pupils** who were due to sit externally assessed examinations this year. The Education Minister has recently released a statement which can be read in full on the following webpage:

<https://gov.wales/education-minister-announces-exam-arrangements-years-10-and-12>

Essentially the Minister has reached a decision following detailed discussion with the WJEC Examination Board and Qualifications Wales, the Examinations Regulator, that Year 10 and Year 12 students **will not be required to sit these exams at a later date**. The Minister has stated the following:

## AS Levels

In Wales, as well as being stand-alone qualifications, AS levels also contribute to A level qualifications. AS units are usually taken in Year 12, with A2 units taken in Year 13. **This year's AS learners will still receive an AS grade**. However, it will be calculated using a range of evidence, including teacher assessed grades. In summer 2021, current AS learners will have two options for their A level award. They will choose whether to:

- only sit the A2 units, with the A level grade based on their performance in the A2 units;
- or sit both the AS and A2 units. They will be awarded the best grade from either route.

## Year 10

Year 10 learners who were due to sit exams that would have led to a GCSE this summer will be issued a grade in the same way as those in Year 11. The grade will be based on evidence including teacher assessments during the academic year to date.

**Those who were due to sit units that will lead to GCSE results next summer will not receive a unit result.** Instead, those learners will have two choices, to either:

- sit only the units they plan to take in summer 2021, with their GCSE grade based on that performance only;
- or sit the Year 10 units in summer 2021, along with the Year 11 units. They will be awarded the best grade from either route.

When school reopens our dedicated teaching staff will explore these options fully in order to secure the very best outcomes for learners. I would like to take this opportunity to reassure you that any decisions made at a school level will always be made in the very best interests of the pupils. Further information will follow when school reopens and we have engaged in

full discourse with teaching staff and stakeholders on the most appropriate routes for learners- we are not in a position to clarify which routes we will be pursuing at this point. For our Year 12 learners who will be awarded a grade this year, parents and students can rest assured that we will work relentlessly to ensure that the final grade awarded to our learners is fair. Equally for our Year 10 learners we will relentlessly seek the fairest outcomes for them. We will do our very best to work with all stakeholders to mitigate the impact of lost face to faced teaching and learning time.

In other areas of school life, teaching staff continue working tirelessly to ensure a suitable range of online learning activities during the period of closure. These resources have been placed on Hwb Teams for pupils in every class, for every subject. **Every week we aim to set a new range of themed learning challenges across the curriculum areas to engage learners and we wholeheartedly encourage our learners to upload evidence of how they have approached these challenges.** To access these resources, pupils need their Hwb log in details which were printed on adhesive labels and given to students to stick in their school planners during the last week of term. If pupils are unsure of their Hwb login details, please email [hwbloginrequest@hwbcymru.net](mailto:hwbloginrequest@hwbcymru.net). Pupils will find a wide ranges of activities to immerse themselves in during the time of school closure. In addition, they will have the opportunity to communicate with their teacher across Microsoft Teams in order to answer any queries that they might have. Once again, I would advise any pupil who does not have online access to these resources – to email the address below or phone school and we will gladly ensure that a set of learning resources are sent out to you:

[ServicesS@hwbcymru.net](mailto:ServicesS@hwbcymru.net)

Finally I am conscious of the challenges faced by many during this time of social distancing and shielding. A large number of our community miss the rhythm and normality of our daily routine and also the immediacy of our social networks, as such I am highlighting links to the following websites which feature information on wellbeing and mental health which some may prove useful to some:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-public-on-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-the-public-on-the-mental-health-and-wellbeing-aspects-of-coronavirus-covid-19#additional-advice-for-groups-with-specific-mental-health-needs>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

With regard to our prayer life during this time of challenge, I have including the prayer of Pope Francis' to Mary during the Coronavirus outbreak which aims to support the faithful during the threat of the virus:

*O Mary,  
you always shine on our path  
as a sign of salvation and of hope.  
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,  
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.  
You, Salvation of the Roman People,  
know what we need,  
and we are sure you will provide  
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,  
we may return to joy and to feasting  
after this time of trial.  
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,*

*to conform to the will of the Father  
and to do as we are told by Jesus,  
who has taken upon himself our sufferings  
and carried our sorrows  
to lead us, through the cross,  
to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.*

*Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties  
of us who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.*

With very best wishes and prayers for your continued support and good health,



**Mrs Pole  
Headteacher**