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Headteacher: Mr M Wignall

18 April 2021

Dear Parent/Carer and Students

I hope you are all well and enjoyed the Easter period.

Over the Easter break we were hoping to hear news about relaxing aspects of our Risk Assessment but there has been no change to government guidance so we are still expecting students to wear face coverings as they were before Easter.

We are, however, looking forward to the resumption of risk assessed extra-curricular activities and will communicate a timetable of clubs and activities as soon as we are able.

Our Year 11 students begin their first GCSE 'assessment window' on Monday 19 April. Over the Easter period, we received further information about the arrangements for awarding GCSE grades this summer. On the whole, we find the process to be relatively well thought through and as robust as possible given the circumstances. However, the very late arrival of this information is placing a huge amount of pressure on us as we will need to train staff in the new procedures alongside standardising assessments, marking assessments, ultimately providing final grades while continuing to provide high quality learning for everyone at the school.

To provide some time and space for the extra training to take place the school will be closing at 2pm on Monday 26 April and Monday 24 May. Arrangements will be in place to supervise students until 2.40pm where necessary. I apologise for the short notice but hope you understand the importance of this work. This is in addition to the partial school closure on Monday 7 June where the school is closed to students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10.

As usual, we move to 'summer uniform' after Easter, the main change being that students are able to wear their Downlands polo shirts. Uniform guidelines can be found here:

<https://www.downlands.w-sussex.sch.uk/information/uniform/>

We will hope to be able to move out of the year group 'bubbles' at some point next term, again this will be dependent on Covid-19 rates locally and nationally. Whilst we still operate the 'bubbles' students will be able to come to school in PE kit when they have PE. We have strict guidelines about the PE kit, which can be found below:

Girls	Boys
School PE Sweatshirt or school jumper	School rugby shirt worn over indoor PE shirt. School jumper may be worn over rugby top
Black tracksuit bottoms, black leggings or PE 'skort'	Black tracksuit bottoms or black 'skins' worn under PE shorts or PE shorts (can be worn under school trousers.)



Another important change is that students will no longer be permitted to wear coats in the building, therefore students will need to make sure they bring jumpers to school as windows will still be open at all times. If the weather turns unseasonably cold we will allow coats again on a risk assessed basis for a time limited period and will inform both students and home. Sweatshirts or hoodies are not allowed at any time unless they are Downlands branded PE kit.

Thank you once again for your support.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Wignall', written in a cursive style.

Mr M Wignall  
Headteacher