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Dear families

I'd like to start this letter by thanking the many parents who wrote to us expressing their support for the current online learning provision – so many that I have yet to write back and acknowledge your emails and cards individually. I have passed these on to all staff, who by their own admission are learning something new each day about effective remote education.

We have updated [our remote learning information section of our website](#), in response to the large number of responses to our parents' survey and feedback from staff. One of the concerns raised by parents and covered in the mainstream media today was about screen time – for this reason we are adding a recommendation of regular reading, preferably of a real book or newspapers or magazines. Reading together with young people is one of the most important ways that you can support them during this period.

Families of any students who are struggling with digital access because they do not have a keyboard device to use during school hours or because of internet access should contact their pastoral leader or tutor.

### **Online and personal safety**

Unfortunately, a small number of live lessons have recently been disrupted by aggressive and offensive comments and behaviour from individuals beyond the school. Our investigation, involving our school police officer, is ongoing and we are confident that we will identify the individuals involved.

We would appreciate your support in reminding students of the following:

1. Do not ever share your username or password. If this has happened please request a password reset immediately.
2. Do not respond to social media or email requests for your account details. Let us know immediately if you receive such a request.
3. Attend only your own lessons and only use the chat function when instructed to do so by your teacher.

Any deliberate compromising of online security is in serious breach of our Acceptable Use Policy. Students involved in this sort of behaviour put themselves at risk of exclusion. We take our safeguarding responsibilities towards students and staff very seriously. Ensuring that online provision is secure and safe is our priority. Thank you very much for your support with this matter.

We have also dealt with an incident where a student in our community found themselves in a difficult situation outside of school, having gone out alone late at night. Going for a walk or run to get some exercise is important for all of us and there are genuine, permitted reasons why we can leave the house under current restrictions. However, streets are often quieter than normal at the moment especially late at night, and young people should not be out alone at this time.

### Lateral flow testing (LFT) for coronavirus for students accessing on-site provision

There has been a lot of press coverage of the debate about rapid testing, or lateral flow testing, for students in schools. Here is a summary for parents:

- On the recommendation of Public Health England and the Department for Education, all schools in England are no longer using LFT for close contacts of a positive case. Therefore, if we have a positive case of coronavirus in school, we will still ask students and staff who have been identified as close contacts to isolate.
- With the support of Camden Council and the local Public Health team, we are able to continue weekly testing for any students and staff coming into school regularly. This is an additional protective measure.

Therefore:

- It is very important, inside and outside school, that we all follow the guidance on social distancing and regular handwashing.
- If students have symptoms of coronavirus, or anyone in the household or support bubble does, that they isolate and do not come to school and book a test. Lateral flow testing is only to screen people who do not have coronavirus symptoms.
- Anyone coming onto the school site should continue to take a LFT once per week.

If there is a further update on testing locally or nationally, we will let you know.

### Other items

Thank you to the **Year 8** parents who attended the **virtual parents' evening** last night to receive important feedback from their teachers about the progress students are making with online learning. In particular, thank you for your patience when there were some technical problems with SchoolCloud early on. Parents who missed appointments who are keen to get feedback should contact the subject teacher directly – their names and contact details can be accessed via the students' MS Teams dashboard.

The Department for Education have launched a **consultation on how assessment will work this year** in place of GCSEs and A Levels. We will be responding as a staff body and there will also be a response from governors and from Camden Learning. However, if you would like to see the consultation or respond as a parent, it can be found [here on the DfE website](#).

And finally, some good news – the empty building means that **the library refurbishment** has been brought forward to the week before half term. The new seating, shelving and flexible workspace should be ready and waiting for students when they return. I would like to thank Ms Strike, WESPA and the Islington Library Service in particular for the support they have given in all the planning and preparation for the work.

Yours faithfully



Izzy Jones  
Headteacher