

20<sup>th</sup> March 2020



Dear Year 10 students and families

Firstly, let me wish you all the best for the weeks ahead. This is obviously an unprecedented situation and it is likely to be a challenging time for all of us. We know people will be worried and, like you, cannot be sure what exactly happens next. However, I want you to know that we care a great deal about your well-being and will be doing everything we can to support you.

We will try keep in touch with any new information but, in the meantime, this letter sets out our advice and expectations as regards off-site learning and a few other key points.

### **Social Responsibility**

Perhaps most importantly, all of us have a great **social responsibility** to do all we can to help the country get through the current situation. From a school perspective, this includes remaining open to children of key workers so that they can continue to get to work to keep the country running.

From your perspective, it is vital to follow the government advice as regards **self-isolation and social distancing**. Whilst young people are very low risk in terms of the likely severity of any symptoms of Covid-19 themselves, it would be deeply selfish to think only in these terms. All of us need to avoid unnecessary contact in order to help stop the virus spreading. I would be extremely disappointed, for example, to see or hear of groups of students gathering together to socialise in the current climate.

### **English Literature**

We understand that you will be feeling upset and frustrated that the English Literature exams will not be going ahead as planned. We share these feelings; you and your teachers have been working so hard and it is really disappointing not to be able to show off what you have learnt. However, we must remember that all is not lost; the work you have done is still important and, one way or another, will be recognised in due course.

At the time of writing, we do not know the details of what will happen as regards exam results but, as far as we are concerned, the worst case scenario is that you sit the exams at the end of Year 11 instead – which is hardly the end of the world. If they do decide to award grades for this year on the basis of some kind of teacher assessment, then you would still be able to have another go at the exams in Year 11 and keep the higher of the two grades.

We will be in touch as soon as we have any meaningful details. In the meantime, we'd appreciate it if you didn't bombard your English teachers with questions about this – simply because they won't know the answers.

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## Academic Work

There are many reasons why it will be important for students to continue to study while school is closed. Apart from the educational reasons, it will be important to maintain some kind of structure to your day for the sake of your well-being.

We will be setting work throughout the period of school closure. Whilst it will not be feasible for teachers to collect and mark much of this work in the short-term, we cannot stress enough the importance of students completing this work. Some key points to bear in mind here:

- All work will be set via **Show My Homework**
- Please email Mrs Brennan (jbrennan@lymmhigh.org.uk ) if you have forgotten your **login details** or are having trouble accessing SMHW
- Work will usually be set in one or two week blocks, but this might vary a little from subject to subject. As a start, teachers have been asked to consider work for the next two weeks.
- If you finish work quickly, then use your **knowledge organisers** to consolidate key information and/or read a book of your choice.
- Keep all **completed work** in a safe place (e.g. on a USB pen drive, in exercise books if you have them or in a folder)
- **Routine** will be very important. We suggest that you aim to follow one that is similar to the school day – i.e. five hours of work, with regular breaks in between. It would be sensible to follow your own timetable when choosing which subjects to focus on and when.
- You can still **communicate with teachers** where necessary – using either Show My Homework or by email (teacher's email addresses are on the school website [here](#)). Please just bear in mind that not all teachers will be able to reply immediately.
- Turn your **mobile phone** off or put it in a different room when studying. It is impossible to focus properly unless you do this. You can check for messages during your breaks.

Parents and carers will be able to help with all this by:

- Helping to find a suitable **workspace** where students have space to spread notes out and, where possible, is quiet.
- Reinforcing the message about the importance of **routine** and following a timetable.
- Taking in an **interest** in the work being done. At the very least, you should be using Show My Homework to check that your child is completing all the work.
- Ensuring children have the right **equipment** - pens, paper and so on.
- Insisting children still **go to bed** at a sensible time and **get up and dressed** at a reasonable time in the morning as if they would for school.
- Reinforce the message about putting **phones** away while studying; this really does make a huge difference.

## Health & well-being and safeguarding

It is really important you look after yourself during this time. This includes **eating** properly and drinking plenty of **water** when studying.

**Exercising** regularly (in line with advice about self-isolation and social distancing) is also vital. There are plenty of online videos that you can use to inspire you with activities to maintain fitness without leaving the home.

If you do have concerns about your child's wellbeing or mental health, please contact either Mrs Ryles-Dean ([hryles-dean@lymmhigh.org.uk](mailto:hryles-dean@lymmhigh.org.uk)) or Mrs Ball ([rball@lymmhigh.org.uk](mailto:rball@lymmhigh.org.uk)). Below are some websites that may also be useful:

Website	Address	Details
Childline	<a href="https://www.childline.org.uk/">https://www.childline.org.uk/</a> (or call 0800 1111)	
Kooth	<a href="https://www.kooth.com/">https://www.kooth.com/</a>	Online counselling and emotional support for young people
The Proud Trust	<a href="https://www.theproudtrust.org/for-young-people/">https://www.theproudtrust.org/for-young-people/</a>	Support for young people with regards to LGBT+ issues
ChatHealth	<a href="https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/chathealth/">https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/chathealth/</a>	Secure and confidential text messaging service for young people. It allows patients to easily and anonymously get in touch with a healthcare professional for advice and support
Brook	<a href="https://www.brook.org.uk">https://www.brook.org.uk</a>	Information and advice on a range of issues, including sexual health
Social Services	<a href="https://www.warrington.gov.uk/socialservices">https://www.warrington.gov.uk/socialservices</a>	Warrington Social Services

Any student or parent with a **safeguarding** concern should share their concerns as soon as they are able to, via either TellUs (using the QR Code below) or Mrs Ball ([rball@lymmhigh.org.uk](mailto:rball@lymmhigh.org.uk)) or Miss Clark ([aclark@lymmhigh.org.uk](mailto:aclark@lymmhigh.org.uk))



### **Free School Meals**

We are arranging for vouchers to be issued for families entitled to free school meals for the first couple of weeks, while we await details of a government scheme for this.

**Local foodbanks** include:

- Warrington Foodbank - 2 Tanning Court, Warrington, WA1 2HF - 07583080521
- Emmaus Church - Capesthorpe Road, Orford, WA2 9AP - 07583080521
- Quench Cafe - 50 Lodge Drive, Culcheth, WA3 4ER - 07583080521

### **Children of key workers**

We will remain open to support families of vulnerable children and/or where one or more parent is a key worker. This is a duty we are taking very seriously and we'd just like to remind families of key workers that they should **only send students in where there really isn't any alternative**; the whole point of school closure is to minimise the number of people who are out of the home. Our assumption is that Year 10 students will not need this provision because they can be safely left at home.

At the time of writing, we are just saying school will be open at the usual times and buses will run as normal. Students should arrive in uniform. However, it is highly likely we will make changes to the normal routine once we have a clearer idea of how many students are involved, how many staff are available and what the needs of the community are. Our intention is to be as flexible as possible in order to support these key workers. This might even include being open at weekends. We will, of course, keep you informed and seek your views on this where appropriate.

Once again, all the best for the coming weeks. I'm sure that we will pull together to support one another.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gwyn Williams', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gwyn Williams  
Headteacher