



Charles Darwin School

Operated by the Charles Darwin Academy Trust

Headteacher: Sunil Chotai, BSc

1st April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

We come to the end of this spring term, a term that has been affected by the 8-week lockdown, consequent remote learning and the return to school after the mass LFD testing of the school community.

On the whole, as I have said before, the remote learning, the return to school and the mass testing have gone well and the vast majority of our students have settled back into the routines of school very well. Students have responded maturely and with a sense of responsibility. My thanks to them all for this. There is a need, however, after Easter, to re-establish some key school expectations that have been adjusted temporarily in the post lockdown context.

In this regard, after Easter we will be making sure that all our standard routines and expectations in relation to uniform, behaviour, homework, and classwork are all restored to near normal as is possible. I will be explaining the details of this to all students in the first few days after the Easter break. For parental information I will be covering the following:

Uniform

Whilst some temporary allowances have been made on return from lockdown– **these will NOT continue after Easter.**

- Coats will not be allowed to be worn in classrooms.
- Jewellery should not be worn- this has become an issue with a small number of girls in particular, after Easter we will be strengthening our approach to this expectation further.
- Hoodies, trainers or non-school uniform items should not be brought in and worn in school. Whilst we have adopted a sympathetic approach where purchase of uniform has been an issue, after Easter our approach to reinforcing this expectation will be stronger.
- Phones should be away at all times – again a small number of students need reminders and our approach to this will be strengthened.
- Uniform should be worn smartly including to and from school – shirts tucked in, ties done up properly i.e. to waistband on trousers, skirts not to be rolled up at the top.

As salons begin to reopen after lockdown a reminder that students should not be coming to school with coloured hair, false nails and false eyelashes.

Whole School Detentions (WSD)

After a period of suspension the Whole School Detention system will recommence from the start of the summer term for those who are unable to meet our expectations regarding behaviour and conduct, repeated missed homework and equipment. Failure to attend a WSD without prior arrangement will result in the detention time increasing.

The overwhelming majority of our students follow our expectations without the need for these reminders. However, there are a small minority who sometimes forget; we will be looking to them to listen carefully, remember and comply.

Public Examinations

All parents will be aware that after the cancellation of the public examinations this year, all of this year's A Level and GCSE grades will be arrived at through school based assessments. This year teachers/schools will only assess students on the content that has been taught. This means that students will not be disadvantaged if they have been unable to complete the syllabus for the full course. However, grades can only be submitted to examination boards for verification on the basis of the evidence we have of students' performance in the content that has been taught. In reaching decisions about these grades teachers are able to draw upon a range of assessment evidence from across a student's study of the course. This may include homework tasks, mock exams, class tests and papers set by exam boards.

Over the last few days, having received some guidance from JCQ (Joint Council for Qualifications) departments in school are fine-tuning their plans for their assessments; we will be writing to parents/families and students in these years separately after Easter with more details.

Lateral Flow Device Testing

My thanks to all parents and students who have been completing the LFD testing at home over the last two weeks. We have distributed to students two more self-test kits this week, these kits contain enough tests for the two-week Easter break. **We are asking all students to ensure that they undertake an LFD test every 3 to 5 days and on the evening of Sunday 18th April or the morning of Monday 19th April. Ensuring that our school community is free from the virus as far as is possible is obviously important for the safety and welfare of all concerned.**

If the test result is positive, we would like you to report this to us in the usual way by email to Mrs. Paterson - dpa@cdarwin.com. All results should continue to be sent to the NHS Test and Trace site <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result> and the school at negativelfd@cdarwin.com

The latest guidance from the government is that students who have a positive LFD test, whether at school or at home, should get a confirmatory PCR test. The PCR test should be booked immediately either online or by calling 119 and should be undertaken within 2 days. Students with a positive result, their close contacts and members of their household should self-isolate immediately in line with NHS Test and Trace guidance while awaiting the PCR result. If the PCR result is negative, it overrides the LFD test and the student can return to school and their close contacts can end their isolation.

Letter to Children and Young People from the Secretary of State for Education

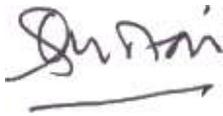
The Secretary of State for Education has written to children and young people to recognise the impact of the disruption they have faced over the past year and to thank them for their resilience. The letter also highlights the importance of coronavirus testing and the vital role

this plays in helping to prevent the virus spreading. The letter is published on the [DfE media blog](#) and on DfE's [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your continued support, the next term is going to be a challenge for our students and staff, especially students who would normally take public examinations this year. Coming to terms with the demands of internal assessments to support the centre-assessed grades will be a new challenge for all concerned, your support here will be very important and much valued.

I hope you all have a peaceful and enjoyable Easter break.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sunil Chotai', with a horizontal line underneath it.

Sunil Chotai
Headteacher