19th April 2020

To our 6th Years,

As our online school re-opens tomorrow, we find ourselves in a strange position. Without doubt the Leaving Cert of 2020 will be spoken about for years to come. You are still our class of 2020, you are going to prove to be a resilient bunch, and you will be continuing with your life, (college, apprenticeship, work), just not yet!

Last Friday 10th April the Department of Education and Skills coupled with the State Examinations Commission made a joint statement regarding the Leaving Certificate. What do we know:

* The current lock-down conditions are in place until May 5th but there is a possibility these will be extended.
* Online Schooling will continue formally for the next six weeks for all students. This takes different formats for different teachers, we all have different subjects and methods, just ***please*** continue to engage online.
* After this it is anticipated that schools and teachers will take a break, much like what has happened over Easter. The duration of this break has yet to be decided.
* It is proposed that leaving cert students and their teachers will return to school mid-July for some preparatory for the Leaving Certificate. (Currently there is no advice as to what will happen with project work and remaining practical exams)
* All indicators are, to prevent social gathering, there will be one exam per day.

The last term is normally less intense, courses are covered, and classes are more about revision and exam preparation. The focus shifts to graduation mass, practical exams, and end of year outing. It would have been your last term in school together, but as the ad campaign says, “Staying Apart is the Best Way to Stay United”. As a school community we will stay United, it is important you keep in touch with each other and with your teachers’ whatever format that may take. You lose the classroom but you now have one to one learning – ask your questions, focus your learning on the areas you need to work on, you don’t have to follow the direction of a class anymore and this means more focused learning for you.

There is only so much we your teachers can teach you; the course and its contents have a limit its finite. Use this extra time wisely, get the direction you need from your teachers and address all parts of the curriculum. Don’t be distracted by all the content online that has been made available, just because it is free doesn’t mean it is good. Too much content can be distracting and whelming. The leaving cert has not changed it is still the same exam despite the circumstances and your teachers know their subjects.

**When all is said and done it will come down to you and quality study**

* Plan your day.
* Get the balance right – this might take a few days. Try identifying the times of the day that are best for study for you.
* Nothing replaces good study - taking notes, mind mapping, recording notes, practice questions, whatever works for you.
* Don’t procrastinate and be distracted, you do have control over the work and now the time to do it.
* Don’t use the current crisis as an excuse, see it as an opportunity to really give your best
* Reward yourself and plan your reward
* Include exercise and down time, again you have time and control of this.
* Look after your diet. ***The school can organise a healthy Breakfast and Lunch for you, delivered to your house (weekly).***

We all wish we were back in school tomorrow, but unfortunately this can’t happen. You will sit your Leaving Cert and life will go on but for now we must make the most of this situation and use our time wisely.

**“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.” – Thomas A. Edison**

Kind regards

Claire Gubbins (Year Head)

James Williams (Principal)

Siobhan Landers (Deputy Principal)