**OUR LATEST NEWS**

 **9th October, 2020**

**EXAMS/ASSESSMENTS**

**October Exams**

Sixth Year students will have exams in some subjects starting on Friday, 16th October until Friday, 23rd October. Your son/daughter will have discussed this with their individual subject teachers and they should be preparing for these exams through extra study and revision.

**End of Term Exams**

Exams will take place for First, Second and Fifth year students from Monday, 23rd November until Friday, 4th December. Students should begin steady and sustained revision in preparation for these exams.

Reports and results will issue to parents via ePortal in due course.

**ePortal**

I would like to remind parents/guardians that you have ongoing access to ePortal where you can view and monitor your son/daughter’s attendance, punctuality, behaviour and academic performance. You are encouraged to regularly monitor ePortal so that you can continue to support your son/daughter’s school journey.

**Text Messaging & Communication **

Please ensure that the number the school has on file for issuing text messages is accurate. Text messages are issued regularly, so if you have not received one, then please contact the school at info@hfcs.ie or on 01-4580766 to update your number. **Accuracy of mobile phone numbers is vital in the current situation where it may be needed by the HSE for the purposes of contact tracing.** Insofar as possible, please keep communication to within school hours. School staff will reply to emails during the school day.

**Information PowerPoints for Parents**

Ordinarily, we would have run Information Nights in the school where parents/guardians would have had an opportunity to meet the Senior Management Team and your son/daughter’s Year Head. Unfortunately, in these challenging times, this is not possible. We have, however, produced a number of Information PowerPoints for each year group which you may find useful. They can be viewed on the school website at [www.hfce.ie](http://www.hfce.ie)

**Parents’ Council**

The Parents’ Council had their first meeting this term via Zoom. It was lovely to see so many familiar faces. The Council would love to have additional members and parent/guardians will have an opportunity to join at the **AGM which takes place via Zoom on Tuesday, 10th November.** The Zoom link will be sent to parents/guardians in the days leading up to the AGM. The guest speaker at the AGM is Michael Ryan. Michael is a qualified counsellor and psychotherapist. He is a weekly visitor to our school where he provides support to students. His counselling services are very much appreciated and make a positive difference to the wellbeing of our students. His private practice, ‘Peace of Mind’ focuses on assisting young people to work through a range of issues in a safe and confidential environment.

**COVID – 19**

**Face Coverings **

I would like to take this opportunity to thank your son/daughter for their exemplary compliance in the wearing of face coverings throughout the school day. I appreciate that it is not easy, but the students of HFCS have risen to the challenge as they recognise that the wearing of face coverings adds protection for them and for those around them. I would encourage them keep their face masks on when they are coming to and going from school if they cannot maintain a distance of 2 metres. This also applies to senior students who go the village at lunchtime.

It has come to my attention that a very small number of students have been wearing scarves, snoods or other neck attire. **These items do not offer the same level of protection and students are more likely to pull them down from their face, so they should not be worn.** Similarly, visors do not offer the same level of protection as a face mask and should not be worn unless previously sanctioned by the school due to a recognised medical condition.

Cloth, reusable face masks are on sale from school reception for the small sum of €1.00.

We continue to take all precautions in line with the HSE and DES guidelines in order to keep COVID – 19 out of the school. We would ask all parents/guardians to remind their son/daughter’s about their responsibility both inside and outside of school to prevent the spread of COVID – 19.

**Parents’ Guide to Covid-19**

Please click on the link to see our ‘What to Do’ guide for parent/guardians:

<https://www.hfcs.ie/covid-19-guide-and-letter-for-parents/>

**Teaching and Learning Arrangements during Self-Isolation** 

In the event of a class group or an identified close contact having to self-isolate as recommended by the HSE, I want to brief you on the Teaching and Learning Arrangements that the school has in place.

Every student in the school has a unique Office365 account. This account is used not only to access the student’s school emails on Outlook, but also to access the full suite of Office 365 such as OneNote, OneDrive, Teams and others. These can be accessed by logging into [www.office.com](http://www.office.com) through a web browser or downloading the individual apps from the student device’s application store (App Store for Apple or Google Play Store for Android). Teachers regularly upload material onto these platforms and students have full access to this material once they login to their unique account.

I would encourage you to sit with your son/daughter, to become familiar with their login details, where the material is stored and how to access it. This means that in the unlikely event of your son/daughter being recommended to remain at home by the HSE, you know where the material is stored and how it can be accessed. You can therefore support them in continuing their learning from home and continuity of learning and teaching is maintained.

**Leaving Cert Results 2020**

Congratulations to all our Leaving Cert students of 2020 on their excellent results. A number of the students who achieved very high results came back to visit us recently where they were presented with a gift from the Board of Management. We wish them all the very best in their future studies/careers. You can see a photo of their visit to the school here - <https://www.hfcs.ie/leaving-certificate-students-2020/>

I hope you and your family continue to stay safe and well in these challenging times.

Ingrid Fallon

Principal