



Dear Students,

Happy New Year to you all. I sincerely hope that in 2021 the promise within the new vaccines will enable the whole country to see the back of Covid-19 and the various levels of restrictions that have been and continue to be necessary in the battle to control the spread of this terrible disease.

I am sure that many will have watched the public statement last evening by the Prime Minister in which he announced a third full lockdown for England. It is likely that this may last until the end of February and in some instances perhaps into March but much depends upon the 'roll out' of the various vaccines.

In my message to you before the New Year I said that the Senior Management of the College would keep the situation concerning Covid-19 under continuous review. In November the decision was taken that the College would continue with its approach to delivering its educational programmes digitally at the start of 2021. This decision was taken to provide you with clarity and certainty in what we anticipated would be a possibly difficult start to the New Year. The announcement by the Prime Minister last evening has demonstrated just how fluid and fast moving the situation is regarding the new variant of Covid-19 and how this resulted in a third lockdown in England.

The Senior Management of the College are very conscious that the closure of schools, for the majority of school children, may have a significant affect upon some students and at a demanding point in the academic year. We want to assure you that the College will seek to be as understanding as possible if you encounter additional problems resulting from the closure of schools. Please make sure that you make your pastoral tutor aware of any additional problems and remember that if the new restrictions have had a disproportionate impact upon your academic work that the Special Cases Committee and process will consider each case sympathetically.

While this will be a challenging start to the New Year, I am confident that the whole College will pull together to face the additional demands and overcome the challenges before us even in the face of adversary. Please be assured that you, your families and friends are in our thoughts and prayers.

Philip

The Revd Prof PJ McCormack MBE
Principal, Spurgeon's College