

23 March 2020

Dear Parent

A strange weekend for us all, I'm sure.

I am pleased that we had our trial day last week as it has, hopefully enabled your son to continue with some study. Much of our work will take place through Teams - no doubt the internet will be under strain so I'd urge patience on the part of us all.

#SchoolAtHome

It has been really good to talk to teachers this morning who have been delighted with the response of many boys. I would ask that you are insistent that your son gets up in time to start the School day and makes the most of what is on offer.

CANCELLATION OF EXAMINATIONS IN MAY AND JUNE

Whilst I was starting my weekend on Friday evening, the DfE were clearly still hard at work as they published further guidance relating to exams just before 9pm. The advice is clear that Ofqual, and the Exam boards will work with teachers to provide grades for students, replacing the public examinations in the Summer. The guidance states:

- grades will be calculated using a range of data to be provided by schools – attainment, progress over time taking into account the past performance of the school;
- simply using predicted grades would not be fair to all students;
- grades will be standardised across the schools sector (and colleges for A Level); and
- GCSE and A Level students will be awarded a grade which reflects the work they have put in.

I hope that this will alleviate the fears that some of your sons have that their mock exam results left room for growth. Please be assured that we know that boys make considerable strides between mocks and the real thing - teachers are used to this happening and will include this in their thinking when providing information to the School to send to the examination boards.

As a result of this guidance, I believe it is **essential** that Year 11 and 13 students continue to follow the School timetable and to complete work and assessments set by their teachers. There are too many 'unknowns' at present to risk falling behind. If nothing else, teachers will need to base their decisions on a number of factors and there could be many opportunities for your sons to prove to a teacher that they are working at a higher level compared with the last assessment window. I do appreciate that this will be a challenge for boys, for you as their parents and indeed their teachers. We shall do all we can to support our families. Please be assured that Year 11 will get their long awaited extended Summer break, and we will release them around the week of when the last exam would have taken place!

LET'S GET TO EASTER

We have two weeks before the Easter Holiday and we will monitor and review carefully what we are providing in that time. We are very keen to get feedback from boys and their parents – Mrs Forster (Assistant Head) will organise a system for this to happen.

Following the Easter holiday, we are looking at some 'planning ahead' activities to prepare boys for the following year. For boys, in addition to curriculum work, we are very keen for them to 'make gains' to be well-prepared for the next year whether at the Year 9/10, 11/12 or 13/University interfaces. I'll keep you informed.

This unprecedented situation is, indeed, an ill wind but it will blow some good not least in the way we operate as an organisation. I dare not count how many times I travel to Aylesbury for meetings during the course of a year (many of which are tedious) – the circumstances have meant that I'm using Zoom much more (it reminds me of Celebrity Squares!) and I can only imagine that schools will be much smarter when we return in September. The executive team has also been given a once in a lifetime opportunity to review what really does matter and to plan strategically for the future at a time when other commitments are less.

Our Sport Department have their own [YouTube](#) channel to keep your sons (and you too, if you wish) fit and healthy.

MEDICATION LEFT AT SCHOOL

Matron has asked me to include this paragraph and sends her best wishes in so doing:

'A few boys keep emergency medication in Matron's Office. If this is applicable to your son please can you collect the medication from the School Office between 9am and 1pm until Friday 27th March. Please bring some form of identification with you so that we can hand over the medication securely. If you wish to contact the school office about this please do so on 01494 524955; please do not leave a message for Matron on her phone. Any medication that is not collected by Friday will be kept securely in Matron's Office during the period of school closure.'

STAY IN TOUCH

Please do follow me the School's Twitter account. I am quite keen to stay in touch as much as possible and a daily Tweet can often do the job. @RGSHW also gives access to departmental accounts. I will, however continue to write more formally to you on a regular basis. I also plan to write to students now and then as I believe that the connection between boys and school is a key part of the work that we do.

Philip Wayne