
Principal's Newsletter

25 September 2020

Dear Parents,

It remains remarkable how well our pupils and students have responded to the unique challenges which the virus is imposing upon us. We are now, like every other school in the city, a mask wearing school in the secondary phase. Pupils in four year groups have been directly affected by cases. New routines are regularly introduced. In every respect pupils, students and parents have responded with intelligence, common sense and great self-discipline. I am particularly impressed by the way pupils and teachers are switching quickly between full time on-line and in person teaching. All lessons are being taught. The virus is in this respect no longer substantially reducing teaching time. I am sure you agree that this is an amazing technological and managerial triumph. Hats off to our IT department and to all our teachers who are becoming experts in this blended model.

Public Health England has issued advice to parents in identifying when their child needs to self-isolate as a result of displaying coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms and answering some of the questions parents may have around testing. Please [click here](#) to read the PHE letter.

Mrs Cassidy has also asked me to include a note about the storage of face coverings. If your child is in Years 7-13 they should have an individual, sealable plastic bag with them so they can safely store their face coverings in between use.

Remarkable progress has been made by Ms Odita-Sani and Ms Diamond and their small group of student advisors. They are pursuing status for the College as a Unicef Rights Respecting School. You can more learn about this [here](#). This seems to them and us a wonderful framework to work on in making our school more inclusive and more conscious of its role in promoting inclusion.

Our editor at LCPRESS www.lcpres.org.uk has headed off back to Oxford and has passed the baton of the editor's pen to Joe Freeman, an OL, who is currently studying philosophy at Reading. Joe is keen to hear from pupils, parents, OLs and others who wish to contribute thoughts and observations about education. I was greatly inspired by Ms Kim Johnson MP, the first black MP in Liverpool, who honoured our podcast by taking some time to talk about her own education and her experiences as a young black woman in Liverpool. Worth a listen [here](#).

Music in lockdown is a real challenge. However, Mr Bishop and Ms Clark are amazingly innovative in finding ways to keep music lessons and music activities going. They put together a music assembly which explains how music, certainly a consolation and an opportunity in these homebound days, is still keeping going. It is still possible to take up music lessons, to begin something new. Indeed, this might be the best time to do so in many respects.

Our Founders' Day preparations are somewhat surreal. Friday 9 October will be a normal school day but our Chaplain is putting together an on-line service which will pay tribute to the history of our school and especially its mission. It is really amazing how creative people become in these circumstances.

Here is another example. Sam B and Charlie H in Year 11 are going to be running uncountable numbers of laps of our playing fields in support of the Young Minds Trust. You can support their fundraising efforts [here](#). Mr Cook will be filling the fields again on Saturday morning. These sport sessions are mandatory. They are so important at this time, when all of our exercise levels may be under threat because of restrictions.

Here is a short description of the contribution Harrison D (Y10) made during his D of E award volunteering. I am hugely cheered when I read this and hope it brings a stirring in your soul also:

Harry is a special individual whom I would welcome back to the club anytime. He was always punctual, presentable, and prepared. The members absolutely loved him, he was genuine, caring and respectful which is very hard to find at a young man of his age. He is a credit to his parents and his school.

Harry is an exceptional young man with such a caring and affectionate side which shines through when he is with the members of the group. Harry wanted to gain a deeper understanding about adults with learning difficulties. At our group Harry with another volunteer present was able to work closely with the group learning their individual needs, their fears, their ambitions and also what it is like to have a disability. Harry got to ask the individual members questions and I think listening to their stories made Harry realise how independent and intelligent these guys truly are.

Harry learnt many skills, working alongside our drama teacher and myself, he was able to deliver Drama and speech workshops, he also created a gentle workout for the members to follow even helping one of our ladies who is in a wheelchair, Harry adapted the gentle workout so she could also join in. He played the guitar for the group and they got to sing, which they absolutely loved. Harry also helped out at Meal times, delivering food to the table and helping cut food to those members who need that extra little help.

The most beautiful skill I saw with Harry was the Respect and kindness he delivered to each member of the group without patronizing any of them or speaking down to them, he was their equal and became their friend.

Some pupils have asked about using electric scooters in commuting to school. Our understanding is that such scooters may not be used on pavements or roads, so we will not be allowing pupils or students to commute on them. I would however urge everyone to consider bicycle commuting if at all possible. Bicycles allow pupils to avoid public transport. They are environmentally wonderful, and they reduce traffic. Finally, they teach independence. Numbers of bicycles on campus have increased enormously. I hope this trend continues.

The Road Safety Team at the local authority have issued a letter to parents regarding parking outside schools – please [click here](#) to read it.

My personal thanks for the many encouraging messages before and after my operation. The doctor tells me it was all a big success. I am embarrassed how well I am feeling as I recover and hope to be back on campus as soon as my doctor allows me to be there.

May I wish you and yours a warm and sunny weekend.

Yours sincerely,

Mr H van Mourik Broekman
Principal