



# SIR THOMAS RICH'S SCHOOL

Oakleaze, Gloucester

From the Headmaster - 22 May 2020

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I said in my email at the end of last week that we can only respond to advice from the Government and Public Health England as we receive it, and at times it does feel as if we are stuck in an endless loop of official briefings and guidance followed by debate and anxiety. In a healthy democracy, there should be debate and a sharing of views but also we must learn to respect those with different perspectives and in coping with this unprecedented situation, I firmly believe that what unites us, is much greater than what divides us.

### **Face-to-face sessions for Year 10 and Year 12**

Last week, I outlined our initial thinking about what any return to school for Years 10 and 12 might look like. Between then and now, you will be well aware of the national, political and media debate around the re-opening of schools and we have yet to receive specific planning reopening guidance from the Government. Schools do not receive any briefings ahead of the public. Indeed, I am acutely aware that guidance may be released as you read this email. However, for me, it is important to recognise that no one should feel under any pressure to put themselves at risk and it is completely acceptable for individuals to decide that they are unable to work on site. However, based on the evidence we have and the detailed risk assessments we have carried out, we do believe that the face-to-face opportunities we hope to offer will ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

Nevertheless, a further government decision is expected on 28<sup>th</sup> May and it is entirely possible that our plans will not come to fruition if the key tests set out by the government are not met. We also appreciate that travel will be impossible for some and therefore Show My Homework (SMHW) will continue to be the primary way of delivering the curriculum supplemented by some Microsoft Teams sessions. Mr Tilley and Mr O'Neill will be writing to pupils and parents of pupils in Years 10 and 12 respectively over the next week or so with detailed plans about the face-to-face sessions outlining what each student can expect including the number and length of any student periods in school, student group sizes, timings and other key information.

### **Remote learning and further use of Microsoft Teams**

You may remember from my last email that we have been trialling the use of Microsoft Teams to supplement learning and teaching in Year 12. A timetable for Year 12 sessions is now available on [Sharepoint](#) and Mr O'Neill, Head of Year 12 has also emailed students with the timetable.

After half-term, we will roll out the use of 'Teams' for pupils in Key Stage 3 and, once Year 10 have had some face-to-face contact in school, they will also be able to access Teams sessions with their teachers. I would be grateful if parents of pupils in Year 7 -10 could follow access your Parent Gateway account and follow the instructions below so that we have your consent for your son to take part in these online sessions. We hope that this arrangement will supplement and enrich the work set on SMHW which will remain our primary means of provision during this time.

The Instructions for Parents are:

- Login to your Parent Gateway account here: <https://parentgateway2.strschool.co.uk>
- Click 'My Information' on the main screen
- Click 'Your Students', then the student you'd like to enable Teams for
- Find the 'Parental Consent' section and click 'Allow student to take part in Microsoft Teams sessions'
- Repeat this process for any other children as required

### **Summer work for Year 11 and Year 13**

Our Year 11 students should have received an email from the Sixth Form team outlining our 'Summer Modules', which have been designed to introduce students to subject study at A Level, as well as to remind students of our main curriculum aims. The material has been split up into a series of tasks, recommended reading and other recommended activities. Year 13 students will shortly receive an update from the Key Stage 5 team to help them prepare for life beyond A levels and indeed school.

As another half-term comes to a close, it is impossible to escape the sense of collective anguish that this pandemic is causing and it is clear that education is inextricably linked to wider issues around public health. The School continues to be open for children of Key Workers and vulnerable children over the half-term break - we will endeavour to provide a secure and supportive environment where our pupils can access their education, be it face-to-face or in our new world of remote learning.

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Matthew Morgan,  
Headmaster



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