



From the Headmaster - 20 October 2020

Dear Parents

As you will know from my earlier email, there is a confirmed case of Covid-19 in Year 13.

As a result, we have carried out detailed contact tracing this morning and we are confident we have now identified all those members of the school community who have been in close contact with the affected student, who is experiencing symptoms but fortunately is not feeling too unwell. A close contact is defined as anyone who has:

- had face-to-face contact (within one metre) including a face-to-face conversation
- been coughed on
- had skin-to-skin physical contact, or
- been in contact within one metre for one minute or longer
- been within 2 metres (for more than 15 minutes)

We have been in touch with all those we have identified, who are now staying at home and self-isolating, following the national guidance. I am pleased to report that the vast majority of students in Year 13 have been informed that they can return to school tomorrow and no longer need to self-isolate.

We have been fortunate not to have a positive case in school until now, and it serves to remind us of just how important it is to practise social distancing and minimising our contacts where possible in order to reduce the level of disruption when these situations arise.

Extracurricular Music relaunches

The Music Department is delighted to offer students a return to collective music making and ensemble playing from 11 November, and we look forward to inviting parents and the wider school community to see the results of the online rehearsals at our virtual Christmas concert in December.

Since September we've been unable to offer our usual lunchtime and after-school extracurricular activities and we know this has been very much missed by staff and students alike, and we're pleased that after half-term we will be able to offer online rehearsals via Zoom each week. If your son or daughter would like to take part, Mrs Jones has written to students and parents with an online form to complete. We look forward to seeing – and hearing – as many students as possible after half term.

House Art

The annual House Art Competition was launched this week, and the deadline for entries on the theme of 'isolation' is 13 November. Students can see Miss Parry or visit the Art Department Instagram account at www.instagram.com/strsartdepartment for more details. I look forward to seeing some imaginative contributions.

Prestigious Engineering Scholarship for Former Pupil

We're proud to announce that James Falkiner, class of 2019, has just been awarded a prestigious Institute of Engineering and Technology Diamond Scholarship. James is studying Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the University of Bristol and the award will allow him to allocate more of his time to learning and expanding his knowledge through extra courses available through the University of Bristol.

James is keen to let current Rich's students know about the award, which he says is well worth applying for if planning to study an engineering or technology related degree: www.theiet.org/impact-society/awards-scholarships/scholarships-and-bursaries/iet-diamond-scholarships.

Remote Learning

Teachers are endeavouring to ensure that classwork and homework is posted regularly on Satchel One so that students who are absent from school due to Covid-19 can access their learning online. To consolidate the work set on Satchel One, teachers have also been offering Teams sessions where appropriate and it has been pleasing to see students join these sessions when they would have normally been at school. Of course, remote learning can never replicate face-to-face lessons where teachers and students can respond to each other and interact. Nevertheless, we have been impressed by how the relationships that have been developed in the classroom have equipped students to face the challenge of independent online learning and all that it entails.

We continue to evolve our offer in response to the current context and government guidance but, despite the inevitable disruption to learning while the pandemic persists and the sense of powerlessness that it evokes, the sense of support and solidarity in the school community has been incredibly uplifting. As we approach the end of this half of the term, I would like to extend my appreciation to staff and students for their resilience and forbearance over the last few weeks.

Yours sincerely



Matthew Morgan,
Headmaster

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