

30th March 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

Thank you so much for your continued support throughout the very difficult last few months. We are delighted to have our students back in school and return to face-to face teaching. It has been impressive how well the students have settled back into school routines and how quickly they have re-established their friendships and football teams and favourite places. They have much to catch up on and are wasting no time! Break times and lunch times are very noisy places but we don't mind! Our school has been empty for far too long.

After school activities are returning. PE and Sports activities are up and running, with other curriculum areas offering an extra-curricular programme, once their work with Year 11 and 13 students has been completed. With no terminal exams this year, teachers are busy working with students to gather the strongest and more robust evidence possible to support school assessments. They are having to work quickly and intensively as deadlines for submission are tight. Students know this and are focused and determined to demonstrate how much they know, despite school closures and much teaching being remote.

If there is one area that needs improvement for next term it is uniform. This is predictable and we have allowed for a period of adjustment. However, from next term all students from Year 7 to Year 11 will be expected to be in immaculate school uniform with sixth formers abiding by our smart dress code. This is a non negotiable. Our expectations are clearly explained in The Student Handbook – page 7 [on our website here](#). Please do not allow your children to convince you that 'everyone else does' – they don't! Thank you for your cooperation.

Perhaps the one positive that has come out of school closure is the break through with independent learning, technology and parental engagement. As parents you have engaged first hand with our live teaching and now know much more about what we teach and how our young people learn. We must build on this engagement and find ways to maximise our support for future home learning. Our curriculum is being adapted and designed to respond to this.

Testing at home throughout the Easter holidays

We would like to say a huge thank you to all the families who have supported their children completing and reporting the twice weekly testing so far. We have now distributed the second set of home tests kits to all the students. A text was sent home to remind parents that we would be distributing tests on that date.

Your son/daughter will now have enough tests to last until our return in April. We would urge you to maintain the routine you have already established with regards when your child tests and continue to:

- test twice a week at home from now on (all those who are able to)
- report results [online here](#) as positive, negative or void. Only contact the school if your child has a positive test. Remember - these tests are for those who are asymptomatic. If you or your child are showing any Covid 19 symptoms then you must book a PCR test. *This information is critical in helping us to understand the prevalence of the virus across the country.*
- continue to test twice weekly over the Easter holidays
- test before returning to school or college for the summer term, either the night before, or morning of, the first day back, to find and isolate any positive cases

Families and households can also access [Lateral Flow tests by clicking on this link](#).

We have been asked to let you know that if an incident leads to, or has potential for, harm (for example, swab breaks in the mouth, bleeding, allergic reaction on using the kit), as well as seeking support from the helplines above, the individual testing at home should report this on the [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) yellow card reporting site](#).

If you would like more info on the easing of lock down restrictions then follow this link. [Road map out of lock down Spring 2021](#)

Free School Meals

Thank you to all those families who completed our online questionnaire to see if their child was eligible for FSM. We are glad that a significant number have had their applications approved. Please do remember that if your financial circumstances do change, do not hesitate to get in touch so that we can help process your application.

We will not be providing vouchers during the Easter holidays. The government will continue to provide support with food and other essentials through the COVID Winter Grant Scheme, run by local authorities. Further information on the provision of free school meals and the COVID Winter Grant Scheme can be found in the government guidance here - [providing school meals during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#).

School Council Developments

Last week staff shared a very poignant 'Let's Talk About' tutor session about the recent disappearance of Sarah Everard. They discussed 'what can society do to help support women feeling safer, who to go to if they feel that they need support, how to safely challenge unwanted comments and actions, respect and understanding what equality means. We have discussed with the boys how they can be better allies to women. [We were very proud to share Mahalia in Year 8's poem, 97%](#). As a key member of the school council, Mahalia will be very much part of the team who will be working with staff and their peers next term to

address the unacceptable use of misogynistic language. The school council should be applauded for their determination and resilience, especially throughout lockdown, they have made great progress with their other targets that they set as priorities this year. As a result of their campaigning and hard work, we continue to update and improve toilet facilities across the school and will be launching a new, healthier and exciting catering offer in September.

Remainder of important Summer Term Dates

- Return to school Monday 19th April at 8:30am
- Thursday 29th April Year 8 Parents' Evening. Bookings are now open [via School Cloud](#)
- Thursday 20th May Year 7 Parents' Evening
- Week Beg Monday 31st May Half term.
- Week beginning Monday 21st June Allyship Week
- Week beginning Monday 21st June Yr 11 Transition into Sixth Form Week
- Week beginning Monday 28th June Yr 13 Transition Week
- Sports Day 19th July
- Wednesday 21st July End of Summer term.

If any of you are at a loss for activities and things to do over the break, we have compiled a list to help inspire you. Please see attached.

Finally I would like to share with you a wonderfully uplifting short film that our Performing Art Sixth Form students have produced. They may have been unable to perform in front of live audiences but I think you will agree they are a talented, inspirational and creative group of young individuals whose advice is wise, honest and uplifting. They are a real credit to their parents and teachers. So much hope, fun, sentiment and talent! - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qbe5Dn5scrA>.

Wishing you all a Happy Easter, with kind regards.

Denise Webster
Head teacher

Fun over the Easter Break

Lockdown restrictions are still tight over the Easter holidays, but that doesn't mean you can't have some fun. Why not take a look through this list of activities suggested for the Spring break?

Turn a walk into an adventure

Turn a family walk into an adventure by finding a treasure trail near you. Crack clues along the route, unlock local stories and solve the mystery at the end. It's a great way to turn a walk into something different. Or get the geocaching app and become part of the world's largest treasure hunt.

Set a cooking challenge

Why not give your teenager the challenge of cooking dinner for the entire family? If they are already an experienced cook, you might want to add to the challenge by choosing the ingredients for them and then getting them to come up with their own recipe based on these ingredients; if they're less experienced, get them to cook along with an online chef or follow a recipe. Dinner too adventurous? How about getting them to prepare lunch or a special treat, such as cakes or brownies.

Escape in a book

Get your teen to think of a theme and set a challenge for them to read one or more books over the holiday. It's better if this is exploring an idea that's interesting to them and not directly related to their studies (although it could be connected). Need inspiration? Examples include: biographies of celebrities they admire; a historical novel set in a period of history that interests them; books on self-development; books about places of local interest; books around things they've enjoyed (such as how a film/series was filmed, how to improve at gaming; how to apply make-up). For those that don't like to read, listening to an audiobook or podcast could offer an alternative.

[Audible](#)

[Many books](#) (free eBooks)

[All you can book](#)

Visit a museum

The museums may be closed but they can still take a virtual tour in twelve of the world's most famous museums online – and it means they can travel across the world without leaving the house! Try [Virtual tours of world class museums](#)

Attend a gig

We still can't go to a gig in person yet, but there are lots of online gigs to enjoy from home.

[Get to the front](#)

[Ticketmaster](#) – live streaming

Make a film

Shoot a film of less than 15 minutes for entry into the Wimbledon Shorts and aim to nab the Best Young Filmmaker title (age under 25). Entry deadline 19 July 2021, but there are discounts for early bird entries.

Snap a winner

If your teen loves a photo, get them to switch taking selfies for capturing wildlife. The RSPCA photography competition opens for entries on 4 May 2021. They're looking for photos of animals (including pets) either at rest or on the go, quirky and interesting, beautiful or funny. Images that tell a story about an animal and show their characteristics, are simply unusual or maybe just catch your eye in a split second. There's a category for photos taken on phones and entry is for 12-15 or 16-18.

Competitions

Some competitions may require a little effort for entry, others may require a lot. Working to a specification, creating something that meets that specification and working to a deadline (in this case, the competition close date) demonstrates terrific transferable skills.

Art Creative Earth –art competition - deadline 5 April 2021 (13- 16)

Royal Academy of Arts – Young Artists summer show – deadline 26 April 2021 – schools must register

Business / Economics Durham University Economics Society Essay Competition - deadline 25 April (sixth form)

Cookery Junior Bake off – deadline 28 March 2021 (age 9-15) Wouldn't it be great to have a Norwood winner?

Fashion / Design Young Fashion Designer UK – deadline Fri 28 May (studying fashion/textiles at GCSE or sixth form)

Film / Photography Childnet Film Competition 2021 – deadline 1 June 2021 (11-19) – theme finding trustworthy information online RSPCA photography competition – opens May 2021 (12-15 or 16-18)
Wimbledon Shorts – deadline 19 July 2021 (under 25)

Literature Author of Tomorrow – deadline 30 April 2021 (16-21 years)
Foyle Young Poet of the Year, The Poetry Society – deadline 31 Jul 2021 (age 11-17)

Science / Maths Big Bang Competition (for STEM) – (age 11-19)
Space Foundation – International student art contest