



from Tom Lawson MA (Oxon), Headmaster

24 April 2020

Dear pupils,

Just a quick note to make you aware that we continue to monitor the situation with regard to the school closure and the Coronavirus pandemic and will, of course, let you know if we have any clear indication of when schools will reopen. You will have read various news stories about the lockdown being partially lifted after half term but also reports about it continuing until September or later. I do not think the news outlets know any more than we do.

Some countries are allowing (Denmark) or intend to allow (Scotland) pupils back in school in a limited fashion – some year groups and not others with social distancing at school. Such a policy would be an organisational headache for us but we are at this moment preparing for all scenarios so we can react as effectively as practicable if there is any policy change.

In the meantime, we continue to hone the remote learning provision in the light of your feedback. Many of you who found the systems tricky at first are now using them very effectively. We understand that some of you have weak broadband signals and that is a problem. We are working very hard to adjust methods and timings so those in different time zones are not disadvantaged. We also need to think of setting some tasks that do not require you to be at the screen because we worry that you have been obliged to increase your screen-time too much. Do remember that you can hand write work in most cases and photograph it before posting it electronically if that helps rest your eyes. I am sure, also, you will need to take an active decision to keep away from the screen when possible in your breaks and leisure time – unless you are following [Mr Rotivator](#) of course! (Parents, if possible please do ensure that you can check screen time on your children's phone accounts.)

I have been delighted in the uptake of the Year 13 post-A-level courses. 79 of the 79 pupils registered as possibles for the Social Studies faculty, for example, have engaged at least in some way with the courses that range from workplace excel and data handling skills to the conduct of interwar monetary policy. If Year 13s are still not fully aware of the options available to you, do please get in touch with your tutors.

I have been hugely impressed with your hsms efforts to keep house spirits up. *Inter alia*, all of the below have taken place over the last week or so in various houses:

- Year group and house quiz competitions
- Weekly house prefect challenges
- Weekly briefings to whole house
- Hsm challenges
- Seniors offering drop-in subject help for juniors
- Live registrations
- Tutor group meetings
- Planned cross house charity initiatives including parents
- Year group drop-ins with house prefects
- Virtual social times

Continued over

Do try to keep a healthy balance and let your tutor know if you are finding you have any problems with the online programme. We are all thinking of you here and it is such a shame to see the College bathed in sunshine with no pupils to enjoy it. Fingers crossed that the weather stays good for your return, whenever that may be!

With very best wishes,



Tom Lawson
Headmaster

Cc Parents, teaching staff