

## Remote Message from the Principal 5

1<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear all,

I hope everyone has had a good week as we continue to get to grips with our new normality. My walks have been a little less stressful this week, only having to dodge the late to arrive April showers instead. I do hope you have all managed to enjoy some fresh air in between the rain. I can't quite believe April has now come to an end; an entire calendar month spent in lockdown. April is usually my favourite month of the year for many reasons, but it has certainly been a strange one this year. Still, I think we will always remember April 2020! And we are coming to six weeks since we were last in school all together - the length of a normal summer holiday - which is even stranger.

Of course we are not on holiday at the moment and, in many ways, the work we are all doing – teachers, support staff, pupils, you as parents - is more intense than ever. What we are all juggling, especially all of you who are still working and supporting your children at home, results in some very impressive plate spinning. **In this situation it is therefore inevitable that the odd plate may briefly get dropped, but it is important that you don't beat yourself up if this happens. This situation is testing everyone, in every profession, in every situation. Let's be proud of the plates that are in the air instead.**

This week I have also challenged all staff to reflect on and celebrate a new skill that they have developed over the last six weeks. I don't necessarily mean some new creative hobby, or physical skill - things we often see others writing about on Facebook – as I expect for many of you there simply hasn't been time for that. But in this situation we can't help but be constantly learning, developing and broadening our experience. For me I am having to learn very quickly to accept that I can't always predict what will happen next. For those of you who know me well, I am a planner and a list maker. I forward think everything. This can cause problems of course, as life doesn't always work like that and you can definitely over plan. In education there is a huge amount of the unexpected on a day to day basis, but the overarching plan can still remain. Even this is now suddenly a lot harder, especially as we still have no sense of timescale of when we might return or how. So very quickly I have had to learn to be far more flexible and to even let some things go. Whilst I doubt I can completely change habits of a lifetime, maybe, just maybe, these new skills will stay with me a little after lockdown. I have certainly put 'plan less' on my post lockdown to do list... 😊

So, in a minute this weekend, between all those spinning plates, **pause to reflect on what you have learnt about yourself, or a new skill you have developed over the last six weeks. I bet you will be surprised.**

I will send out another video message to all pupils next week, but this week we have another primary assembly from Mr Hanna and our second secondary assembly, this time from Mrs Wade – both shared on SMHW. Below, please find this week's important information as well as a celebration of remote learning since the Easter holidays.

Next week I will be in touch on Thursday as obviously next Friday is Bank Holiday. Such a shame that the VE Celebrations can't continue as planned, but I hope we all manage to mark it in some way.

Wishing you all a relaxing weekend,

**Louise New**

**Principal**



**ALL: Remote Learning:** Thank you for your continued support in this area. As I mentioned last week, we are concerned by an increasing number of Secondary pupils who are showing very little engagement in the work, especially in Year 10. Members of the pastoral team will be in contact with pupils who we are most concerned about. Just to emphasise, this is about pupils who are not engaging at all, rather than chasing individual missed pieces which some pupils simply won't have been able to manage on top of everything else. Please do let your child's class teacher or tutor know if they are struggling to access the work at all. An exciting BBC activity has been shared by Mrs Sabin on SMHW and the School Facebook site.

**YEAR 9: GCSE Guided Choices:** Confirmation of these choices has been sent to all Year 9 parents today, via email. If you have not received this, please contact the School Office. If you have any queries, please contact Mr Elliman directly.

**YEAR 11: Important Information:** A separate email will be sent this weekend to Year 11 parents and pupils. Please do contact the office if you have not received this email by Monday.

**ALL: Pupil Reports:** Pupil reports will be sent to you at the start of next week. We do not feel that sending them today, now, is appropriate, as if you have any queries or concerns there is then a long wait over the weekend before you can contact your child's teacher or tutor to discuss. I will send a further email when these have been sent. Please do contact the School Office if you have not received your child's report at this point. These will be sent to the priority one contact email, and to anyone with parental responsibility in a separate household that we have been made aware of. As with all email distribution systems, strict GDPR systems are in place. However, we have to state the following to you in line with GDPR guidance - **if you believe you have received a report in error, please do not open the attachment, delete the email and contact the School Office immediately.**

**ALL: Bank Holiday:** As mentioned in my main email, next Friday is Bank Holiday (8<sup>th</sup> May). This was moved for the VE day celebrations from Monday to Friday, although I know that some calendars were printed early and still have it marked as Monday. Please be aware that staff will be treating this as a normal bank holiday and long weekend. So no formal remote learning will be set for next Friday. We will, however, be providing some VE Day optional activities.

**ALL: Pupil, Teacher Communication:** New guidance has been released regarding how communication should be conducted between schools and pupils/parents during this crisis, including emails, phone calls and other forms of virtual communication. All staff have been made aware of this guidance and have been tweaking practices where appropriate. For pupils, when communicating with teachers, the guidance suggests that devices should be kept in appropriate places, for example not in bedrooms, and that users should ensure they are wearing appropriate clothing. The guidance also suggests that if a pupil is using Microsoft Teams to contact staff, they do so as a voice call and not video call. We apologise if some planned communication this week was temporarily halted whilst we responded to these national changes.

## Celebrating Home Learning

From left to right, top to bottom:

Stunning Year 7 art work; Colonel Tom celebration from Childcare Provision; EYFS Science work; home made Marwell residential; primary project work; Year 9 Geography; primary creative response to assembly task; work that was actually retweeted by Frank Cotterill-Boyce; primary writing task.

