



5 February 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

Covid-19

Week 5 of this half term has been another very positive week. There have been as far as we are aware no positive Covid cases in our school community and no positive lateral flow tests on site. With (and I am keeping everything crossed here!) the numbers coming down I am hopeful that we will return to some degree of re-opening on 8 March. However, this is obviously dependent on all of us observing government guidance over the next 4 weeks to keep infection rates at a minimum.

Support

I also want to thank you once again for your wonderful support for the school throughout this current lockdown. It has been brilliant and the donations of books, laptops and e-mails of praise have just blown us away. Most importantly, your support in ensuring home learning has been a success and has made the biggest difference to our primary purpose of education. This has been borne out by our observations from this week.

'Quality Assurance' and expectations

The leadership team alongside Mary Davies, the Maiden Erlegh Trust CEO, spent some time this week quality assuring our online provision. We are able to float from classroom to classroom and look at the work set over the last few lessons alongside attendance and work submitted. What is clear on our initial findings is that the vast majority of our live lessons are of a very high quality, with teachers supporting students to succeed and progress across the curriculum. We are working on some development points from this auditing such as developing our practice in online feedback and ensuring all missed work is followed up. However, to quote Ms Davies "MECE students are getting an excellent deal in the classroom during this lockdown".

From a parental point of view there are some points I would also like to follow up.

- Our attendance to lessons is about 5% below our attendance to morning tutor time and it seems clear that some students whilst getting their morning mark are not then 'going' to lessons. As a reminder, there are live lessons all day every day and whilst there may be work set in some of those lessons the teacher will always be there at the start to take the register and ensure the work is explained.
- It is also clear that one or two students are getting their mark at the start of a lesson and then doing something else. Our expectation is clear that students, just as in normal school lessons, should be available to engage in questioning verbally or on the Google Classroom chat facility or answer questions on apps such as Peardeck or Whiteboard.Fi. If students are not available this will be logged as 'inadequate classwork' or another appropriate comment.



- Staff are asking students to submit work for most of the lessons that they attend but not all students are doing this despite it being a clear expectation. Please can you remind your son or daughter of this expectation.

Lockdown Rewards

Form tutors have been busy nominating students for a reward this week. Two members of each tutor group will be getting a lovely hot chocolate, cookie and sweets reward as recognition of their work across this half term. And to support this lovely initiative members of #teammece will be out delivering these over the next few days.

Pause Day

These matters will be followed up on our Pause Day next Wednesday when our tutors will be calling home to engage in a reflective conversation on the term so far. For most students this will be regarding praise, rewards and 'well dones', but for a few students it will also be a supportive conversation regarding how can we help to improve the quality and quantity of work submitted or increase the levels of engagement in lessons. I hope we can all work together to ensure that as few students as possible fall behind as a result of these lockdowns.

Year 9 Options

A reminder for Year 9 parents that it is our Year 9 Parents' Evening on Tuesday. This follows up Miss Bliss' excellent presentation on Tuesday evening where the structure and rationale for the process were clearly set out. Currently, there are over 80% of parents signed up for Tuesday but this is such an important evening where option choices can be discussed and progress evaluated and I hope we can get to 100% by next Tuesday!

Careers Week

Please see our previous communication home on the Maiden Erlegh Trust Careers Week. With all of us having a little more time on our hands at the moment this is an ideal opportunity for the students to have a chat about future careers and directions along with spending some time on the Careers Fair website.

Parent Bites

Our school counsellor reports that she is noticing a number of students seeing their normal sleep routines get disturbed. Our new Parent Bites video on this topic may just be the answer for many parents. This week Mrs Hills looks at the art of a good sleep routine and how it can support so many other positive aspects of adolescent life. Please follow the link [here](#).

Snow

At present there is some possibility of snow falling on Sunday and into next week. Given that we are currently operating remotely this shouldn't cause any real disruption to our provision, however we will update you if it is necessary on Monday morning and across the week.

Fab and Drab

Please click on the links for our [FAB](#) and [DRAB](#) feedback and [staff member of the week](#) link if you want to let us know about any member of staff you feel has gone above and beyond for the school.



I will leave you with my star of the week who is Amelia in Year 7 who, when submitting work for her teachers, always adds a lovely addition to her work and I know staff have been incredibly touched by such thoughtfulness. Definitely star of the week!! Here is an example of one her 'sign offs'



Have a great weekend and take care.

A. Hartley

Andy Hartley

Headteacher