



5 June 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Welcome to Term 6 and as always we hope you and your family are well and managing in our ever-changing climate. In this letter I hope to provide some brief updates on some of the broader issues which we know are important to families. Before I do that though, I feel compelled to acknowledge the almost surreal circumstances in which we navigate this period. Since I last wrote to you we have experienced previously unimaginable headlines and events.

On the same day that we broke for half term, the newspapers were full of the reports of the actions of the government's chief adviser and the implications in terms of upholding requirements for lockdown. We have seen the efforts to balance recovery from economic hardships with the real safety concerns regarding releasing restrictions. In the last week we have also seen the protests in America, UK and elsewhere following the death of George Floyd. Regardless of, and superseding politics, all of these issues are valid concerns for young people, let alone adults, about leadership, authority, safety and equality.

If we were in College it would be more straightforward to have structured balanced conversations about all of these issues as we have done in the past. However, we do know our students have supportive, articulate and compassionate parents who will be discussing these issues at home. It would be natural for young people to feel a range of emotions in these circumstances, even when not against the backdrop of a world pandemic. We will be addressing issues appropriately through our tutor time materials, but if you have concerns about your child please do not hesitate to get in touch with us to access support, even if simply a different voice.

In the meantime, it is equally important that we provide reassurance of what remains a constant for them at this time; the routines of their work, the praise and recognition of their continued efforts. We can all focus on the day to day successes, being present in the moment and being grateful for our community and what we have; we can only control the things we can control.

Home Learning:

Staff have been planning a new term of activities to provide continued quality of home learning, we aim to provide variety and a range of screen based and non-screen-based activities. Some subjects will involve more enrichment activities as the term progresses. We have now seen some of the students who have struggled with their home learning and understand better where we can continue to improve individual examples of explanation or communication. We will be communicating this clearly to staff. We continue to drive towards the best experience that we can for our students. In the meantime, we would repeat some of the core advice about:

- Students checking Firefly and emails daily
- Students responding to staff feedback in Firefly



- Students/parents politely challenging and checking with staff if the explanation is not clear or if you do not understand
- Establishing routines to aid work and well-being
- Speaking to pastoral managers if you have any concerns

Only our Heads of Year have work phones at home. All Pastoral Managers communicate weekly with all students via email on a weekly basis. If they do not hear back routinely or if there are concerns then they follow up with the Head of Year. All students have access to well-being programmes by Ms Burgess. Every Monday I personally email the students directly with additional tasks they would normally have been completing in tutor time including the House Quiz. Please be assured that whilst we plan for the face to face sessions with Year 10 and 12, I am absolutely clear that we still prioritise the home learning provision for *all* students. The experiences for all are of equal importance. We will continue to evolve still over Term 6.

Face to Face Sessions

We are continuing with our plans to provide face-to-face sessions for Year 12 via Microsoft Teams and Year 10 on site, as well as the key worker provision. I am very grateful to staff for the additional work this has involved both in terms of planning the sessions on top of planning their home learning materials but also learning new software and protocols for the Year 12 sessions. I have no doubt that for both groups of students it will enhance their existing provision and provide a welcome opportunity to see familiar faces. We will be in touch early next week to confirm the places for Year 10 provision starting 15 June, please look out for an email which will require a response.

Trips and Refunds

We have been working hard with all providers of trips for Term 5 and 6 to secure full refunds. We have now made significant progress and are prioritising the repayments to parents we are able to make. We still have a few trips which sit with the insurance company. We have been instructed to wait as they work through their queue of claims. We have to prioritise the age of the trip as we are required to re-issue the refund in the same manner the payment was made. Gateway adds a timeliness that is required for this. Please be assured we are aware of all the individual issues and we are working as swiftly as we can. We are grateful for your patience.

Prefects

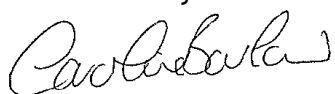
We are thrilled to have received over 95 applications for the 40 prefect places. It is a real credit to our students that even in these remote circumstances they are keen to take up the opportunities afforded to them and play a central role in the College's future. We are currently short-listing and are now looking at establishing an interview process, which is likely to involve video-conferencing and will be in touch to arrange how this will be carried out.

Our Force Field for Good

We believe in our values, our Heathfield Habits, deeply and we promote them in order to model what they can be and already are. We describe a force-field around College, created so that young people can grow up, safe to be the best version of themselves they can be, supported to understand some of the wider world complications. We feel now more than ever that they need optimism, positivity, honesty and integrity clearly shown to them. They cannot be what they do not see. So please help us to encourage them by continuing to send in your pictures, stories and examples of their brilliance, follow and share via [@Heathfield_cc](#) on Twitter.

Thank you again for your continued support of our community,

Yours sincerely



MS C BARLOW
Headteacher