



Royal
Russell

Headmaster's Weekly Newsletter

1 May 2020

Dear Parents and Friends,

I have been pleased to hear of good progress for pupils in all year groups as our virtual school has continued this week. I know from my own experience of connecting with my Year 9 Class on MS Teams that it is impossible to recreate the buzz of an active classroom through the screen of a laptop, but it has been great to have feedback from them on their understanding and to know that they are actively engaged with their learning early in the morning! I'd like to thank all of our staff and particularly to the IT Team, for their amazing work in making the remote delivery of the curriculum as engaging as possible in these difficult circumstances.

Next week Year 13 and Year 11 have their final week of A level, BTEC and GCSE course completion before moving to a new programme of learning which we will publish before the Bank Holiday weekend.

Year 12 will continue with their internal examinations and Year 10 will be focusing on preparation and revision tasks ahead of their own internal examination week starting on 18 May.

On Monday 4 May, Year 8 and Year 9 will begin their new virtual programme which was shared with pupils and parents earlier this week. This is a week earlier than we had initially planned, reflecting the feedback from the changes we had already made.

Year 7 have started their new programme this week and we have written separately about assessments for Year 7, 8 and 9 which we plan for the second half of the term.

If you need any help with information or access to any of these programmes, please do continue to contact us through your tutor and Housemaster or Housemistress or one of our Heads of Year or the Senior School Leadership Team.

Every year, as study leave begins for our examination year groups, I speak to pupils at their examination briefing in Great Hall to remind them to support each other, to work together as a cohort, to take every opportunity to attend revision classes and help offered by the Staff and, of course, to wish them every success in the examination season ahead. Year 11 and Year 13 will be spared that particularly anxious moment this year, which would usually occur next week, but I was reminded that I usually use a brilliant quote from John Wesley as part of my message to them:

*"Do all the good you can,
by all the means you can,
in all the ways you can,
in all the places you can,
at all the times you can,
to all the people you can,
as long as ever you can."*

Whilst this quote will not be helping them through the gruelling examination season this year, perhaps it will help us all to find hope as the challenges of our current situation continue.

Reflecting on this theme, I have included a piece of music within my email composed by Year 8 pupil, Alec Thurbin who has written this piece, called 'Hope' for piano and 'cello. I look forward to hearing this performed 'live' when we are all back at School together.

Mrs Hart has written our assembly for the end of this week, which you may have received in an email and focuses on the positive outcomes which have resulted from the current 'lockdown'.

I hope you are all remaining safe and well,



With best wishes,

Chris Hutchinson
Headmaster