

5 June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Junior School Return to School and Remote Learning Update

It seems hard to believe that we are already at the end of the first week back following our return to College for pupils in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. It is with great pleasure that I write to inform you all that the first phase has been a tremendous success. The genuine joy we saw when pupils returned to school to see their teachers and friends will mark a very memorable moment for us all and one, no doubt, we will be talking about for some time. Pupils bounded into school excitedly and the transition from remote learning to a new, different, style of school life could not have been any smoother. It has been a wonderful week! This would not have been possible without your support and testament to the huge amount of planning and robust risk management that has been undertaken over the last few weeks.

Whilst I know that it may be disappointing for the children who remain at home, there have been plenty of highlights to draw upon from this week nonetheless and discussions are well underway in regard to planning and preparation for the next phase, which may entail all Junior School year groups returning before the end of the Trinity Term. As yet, the government has not advised as to when this decision will be made, yet the statement remains that this remains the ambition and will be kept under review.

Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 6

I would like to thank you all for your support and cooperation in regard to the new school routine, which has very quickly become our new 'normal'. It is clear to see that you helped to prepare pupils for the return to school over half-term and it has made a remarkable difference in regard to embedding and supporting us in the delivery of key messages in school. Returning pupils have a mature understanding of the need for smaller groups, regular handwashing and the many other measures in place. It has made the transition much easier for the teachers to manage and we thank you for your help with this.

With staggered drop-off and collection times working so successfully, we will continue with the same timings and routine until further notice. I would like to remind you that there should only be **one adult** on the College site per family at any point. Please also take note that there is now a one-way system by the East Gate, which requires parents to walk safely on the marked aisle to the side of the car park and not leave under the covered pathway marked out for those arriving to school. I would also like to add that your patience during collection has been very much appreciated, as has your adherence to the timeslot allocated to your child's group.

The list of highlights this week has been endless and it is, if I am honest, very difficult to narrow down the list or to beat the highlight of seeing the smiling faces of the pupils back on the very first day! Having spent time in each of the returning classes this morning, the consensus of all pupils has been how wonderful it has been to see their friends and they swiftly followed this with 'and the teachers!'

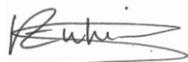
Nursery have been thinking of ideas for their new topic and their most recent fascination is animals; from grass snakes, to lizards to squirrels – next week looks set to be an interesting one! The classroom has had an injection of new colour with a pupil designed fruit tree and today they enjoyed their first House Point assembly. Reception are busy preparing for their Friday party (why not?!) this afternoon as I type and they have absolutely adored the creation of their mud kitchen. Increased learning outside has been something all of the pupils and teachers have enjoyed and it has been wonderful to see the pupils explore the fields and make their outdoor area their own, creating their own games in the process. Who knew how much Year 1 would love working at their own individual desks?! They all told me today that this has been a highlight for them and they already feel ready for life in Prep, complete with their own space, their brand new pencil cases and their own snacks. At the end of a busy first week, they seem to have more energy than ever! Year 6 have been excitedly working on ideas for their end of year celebration and have begun preparations for their transition into Year 7.

Years 2, 3, 4 and 5

There have been many highlights from a new half-term of remote learning for Years 2-5. We have been particularly proud of our remote House Creative Writing competition, including the first ever Pre-Prep contributions. We were absolutely thrilled with the quality of writing and Mr Murphy and I excitedly announced the winners on Firefly today. Please do take the time to have a look as there were significant House Point prizes awarded!

Year 2 have enjoyed their new topic, *How Are You?* keeping a food diary to ensure a well-balanced diet. Their Teams groups have included stories of encounters with frogs, deer and cats, a whole range of home-baked goods, Van Gogh inspired paintings, lighting a bulb using lemons, cat collages, mash making and chalking on the pavement. Year 3 have been getting foodie this week for their new IPC topic *What's on the menu?* They started the week making pancakes with some tasty toppings and have also been designing their own restaurants, as well as making funny food faces in Art. Year 4 have been making Rube Goldberg machines and videoing them for IPC; remote fun continues! This week has been all about holidays in Year 5 as they began their new *Holiday Show* topic. They kicked off the fun when Miss Brown went on her 'Staycation Vacation' over half term with her much-loved pal Philippe the Prawn. The children followed suit with camping in the living room and BBQs in the garden over half-term. They have also travelled the length and breadth of the world on Google Earth; retracing their steps on holidays from the past and been on digital tours as far as the Great Wall of China!

With all best wishes for a peaceful weekend



Miss L Whitwood
Head of Junior School