



Royal
Russell

Beginning of Spring Term

8 January 2021

Beginning of Spring Term

To say that the Spring Term has not started as we all would have wished is a huge understatement! We're incredibly disappointed that we have not been able to welcome all of our wonderful pupils back to the School site for the start of this new Spring Term. I will begin, therefore, with a 'thank you' for the impressive resilience that our young people and our Royal Russell community have shown in adapting to these changing circumstances so quickly. I have seen first-hand the hard work which teachers have put in to confidently switch to high-quality, engaging lessons ready for all our pupils from day one and this has been matched by the effort and enthusiasm from the pupils themselves. Special mention to my Year 9 Physics group who were on impressive form as they grappled with the difference between longitudinal and transverse waves yesterday morning!

In order to make the very most of our online provision and ensure a positive start to the term, it's really important that our pupils are actively engaged in each session. We have asked all pupils to switch their cameras on so that we can see their response and so that they can feel connected to their teacher and each other, at a time when they otherwise may feel increasingly isolated from the live classroom experience. So please encourage your own children to switch their cameras on!

If you find for any reason that your child needs some extra help with their online learning or with any aspect of their education, please do not hesitate to contact their tutor or housemaster/housemistress. If you need guidance with IT issues, please contact our experts on ITTeam@royal.russell.co.uk. As a member of the Royal Russell community, you will always find support here when you need it.

One of the highlights of the week has been the return of a small number of pupils to the site as we have welcomed the children of key workers in the Junior School and Senior School. These pupils have been some of the first to experience the 'lateral flow testing' which we have set up in the ground floor of the new Queen's House building. The testing team have also been testing staff working on the School site in order to protect us all as much as possible.

There have been a number of important updates relating to the Summer GCSE, A level and BTEC examinations announced this week. Mrs Nikki Snelgrove and the Upper School Team of Ms Wheeler-Quinnell, Ms Worsfold, Mr Porter and Ms Reebye have been in contact with Year 11 and Year 13 pupils to share the key elements of these changes. Our position remains that, whether public examinations take place or not this summer, we will need to complete the delivery of the full syllabus in each subject and pupils will need to remain fully engaged in their learning as we prepare them for the next stage of their education here at Royal Russell or beyond.

I would like to congratulate those Year 11, 12 and 13 pupils who have successfully completed the GCSE and BTEC examinations which we ran on Wednesday and Thursday of this week. It was very reassuring to see some 'normal' activity on site, safely completed, for these groups.

In a week where we have seen news and announcements which have affected all of us very deeply, I shared an image with staff from Charlie Mackesy, which I felt was particularly powerful. I hope you are all able to take the next step forward as we move towards a return to learning together here on site in the future and I wish you all a very successful term ahead.

With best wishes and Happy New Year

Chris Hutchinson

Headmaster