

# CANFORD

Canford School

Wimborne, Dorset BH21 3AD  
t: 01202 841254 f: 01202 881009  
www.canford.com



From the Headmaster  
B.A.M. Vessey, MA MBA  
email: [headmaster@canford.com](mailto:headmaster@canford.com)

5<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This is a difficult and frustrating time for us all and none of us wanted the return to remote education that we are now required to put in place until half term. However, we have to face realities and it is important that we view the glass as half full. As you would expect we will work closely with your sons and daughters to explore all the possibilities and opportunities for learning growth and development as actively as we can in the coming weeks. We demonstrated our individual and collective energy, creativity and innovation in so many wonderful ways last summer, and I am sure we will do the same again in both similar and different ways in the period ahead.

The key ingredients in our remote offering last time were providing structure, giving a sense of purpose and ensuring a strong feeling of community connection. We will put big handfuls of all these ingredients into our programme for the coming weeks as Canford provides a high quality academic education supported by a stimulating co-curricular programme and a strong focus on pastoral care and wellbeing.

A full programme of academic lessons will commence tomorrow morning following House zoom assemblies at 8.45 and these will be a mixture of teacher-led sessions, interactive group work and individual study via Teams as per last summer. Pupils will be registered at the start of each lesson. Where possible we would ask that pupils meet teacher requests to keep their cameras on for lessons as this makes engagement with lessons more effective.

Lessons will run to the existing timetable from Monday to Saturday as we feel it is important to keep familiar routines in place. We have adjusted lunchtime lessons slightly to ensure all pupils finish lessons by 13.05 each day which should help with the logistics of family lunchtime in lockdown.

Morning breaks will be half an hour (10.40 - 11.10) and we have messaged to staff that these breaks need to be just that – a rest from the screen!

Prep will be set but, acting on lessons learned from last summer, we will manage the amount of prep so it is meaningful but not overwhelming.

Running to the existing timetable will ensure that on most days (except Wednesday and Friday) lessons will be completed by lunch time (13.05) which will give pupils the afternoons to step away from screens, get outside and exercise whilst it is light and engage with some of the co-curricular programme activities.

For Fifth Form and Upper Sixth pupils we know that there will be anxiety over what will happen with GCSE and A Level results. We don't yet know what the plans will be in this regard but we will do all we can to reassure and support our pupils in these year groups as the situation unfolds and things become clearer. We would ask that you help us to maintain a sense of calm and perspective as far as possible on this important issue, regardless of how the press and others may seek to heighten emotions.

Pastoral and wellbeing support will be very much present with regular formal tutor meetings as well as support from HsMs and House teams, our Joint Heads of Wellbeing, The Chaplaincy Team, The Support for Learning Team, The Health Centre and counsellors and indeed from all Canford staff. We know how important it is to have regular contact and care, as well as creating some online social opportunities to connect with peers and staff.

We will seek to keep parents informed and involved as best we can during this time and it is important we all work together and keep talking. The school social media feeds and website will be regularly updated with the latest news and activities.

The Bursar and his staff are working hard to fully understand the implications of the Prime Minister's announcement for the business aspects of the School's operations. Our priority is to ensure we continue to provide high quality support for our remote education offering and that we are ready to re-open the school just as soon as we are allowed. Alongside this, we are looking to identify efficiencies and cost savings that can be implemented during the site closure. Governors will be meeting in the very near future to discuss how Canford can provide appropriate financial support to parents and we will write to you again with details of any adjustments to our fee structure as soon as they are agreed.

I know we all crave a return to greater normality and the potential impact of the vaccine does offer some hope in this regard. In the meantime I know the Canford Community will stay strong and supportive and we will work together towards that brighter horizon.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Vessey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'V' at the end.

Ben Vessey