



26<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear Parents and Guardians

The spring weather brings with it a genuine sense of positivity, which is greatly appreciated at the end of this rather challenging term. I sincerely hope that this optimism will enable us to experience a more normal school term in the summer. However we need to be realistic and mindful of maintaining a safe environment as we emerge from lockdown. There is much to look forward to and much that will bring joy to the pupils. Once again, I have been incredibly impressed with the manner in which the pupils have approached the difficult period they found themselves in, they have been adaptable, sensible and understanding of the need to be responsible, not just to themselves but also to the wider community.

It is hard to believe that we have been in this pandemic crisis for a year, and therefore it is important that at this time we reflect on the significant impact that it has had on us both personally and collectively. We acknowledge the impact that it has had on our nearest and dearest, and we remember all those who have lost their lives.

I would also like to express my sincere thanks to my colleagues for the remarkable nurturing and encouragement that they have provided to all the pupils in their care. There is no doubt that this term has been tough for us all, and I am most grateful for the work of all members of the Bede's community to keep things going in such a seamless manner. I am particularly thankful for the exceptional work done by the Housemasters and Housemistresses, and their house teams, in providing such supportive communities for the pupils, both during the lockdown and since school reopened. This has not necessarily been a straightforward task, especially when pupils are scattered around the globe, however, fundamental to their efforts has been their commitment to the individualised care for each and every pupil.

The recent social movement, in respect of sexual harassment of girls, in the wake of the tragic death of Sarah Everard has enabled tutors to start conversations with their tutees regarding the central themes. These are complex issues, which need to be addressed and I am thankful to Mrs Murphy and Mrs Nikiteas, for their work in developing a programme of seminars and workshops to run during the Summer term and beyond. It is pleasing that these will very much involve pupil-led talks and events. I would request that parents have open and honest discussions at home with their children regarding this issues of sexual harassment, consent and wider attitudes towards the treatment of others.

We are living in interesting times, and the extent of social issues requiring discussion both at home and in school is numerous. It is vital that we do not shy away from such conversations to educate our pupils and children, thereby providing them with the necessary tools to make a positive impact on society as people of value, is imperative.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Phil Wise, as our Deputy Head (Operations). Mr Wise will be joining Bede's in September, he is currently the interim Deputy Head at Downe House School in Berkshire, prior to this he was the Head of Senior School at Kent College, Canterbury. He brings with him a wealth of educational leadership experience, in the academic, pastoral and co-curricular facets of school life. He is a geographer by trade and, while enjoying many varied interests, he has a particular passion for cricket. We are very much looking forward to welcoming him and his wife, Liz and their two young children, Paddy (7) and Mimi (5), to Bede's.



Recently, our lead nurse, Ms Tourle wrote to you regarding the importance of continuing to carry out the lateral flow tests over the course of the Easter holiday, please can I request that you do indeed continue with this programme, if you have opted to do so. It is not a mandatory programme, however it does provide an additional measure for us in reducing the spread of the virus within the Bede's community.

Next term, we are able to reinstate the running of our late bus service for our day boarder community; this good news as we move towards more normal school routines. In addition, we are looking very closely at our events programme for next term, and will be in touch at the start of next term with a clear outline of all our plans.

In reopening schools on the 8th March, the Government stipulated that returning to school was compulsory. We have been understanding in this respect during this term, however it is our expectation that all pupils (who are able to do so, without the challenges of travel restrictions) return to school next term. We do also appreciate that there are those cases where this is not possible due to family members shielding and if this is the case I would request that you raise this with your child's Housemistress/master.

In closing, I would like to thank you so much for your continued support this term. I wish you a safe and restful Easter holiday.

With warmest regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Goodyer'.

**Mr Peter Goodyer MBA FRSA**  
Headmaster