



Bishop Wordsworth's School

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Dear Parents/Guardians

Coronavirus related matters – you will, no doubt, have seen all of the latest publicity surrounding this rather agonised national debate. I was swamped with national guidance last week. I didn't count but saw a tweet from another Head saying that there had been a total of 14 DfE guidance papers issued over 5 days...! Over the weekend we have drafted a risk assessment for the operation of the school as and when we open for restricted numbers of Year 10 and Year 12 students later this term. The exact operating arrangements have yet to be finalised, and I will need to be convinced by the evidence of risk levels before considering allowing boys back. At present the situation remains unclear and (personally) I think it unlikely that BWS will open to anything other than key worker/vulnerable children much before mid-June at the earliest, though Friday's meeting between the Teaching Unions and HM Government Scientists in London seems to have generated some relatively positive mood music. The school will of course remain open to the sons of key workers and vulnerable boys over the half term week.

Remote Learning – please bear in mind that your son's teachers will be setting work to emulate his weekly timetable loading, so the work set may not precisely follow the pattern of lessons but the overall level of demand will be approximately the same as might have been expected were the school to be open and circumstances more routine. Sometimes the work may be set in slightly larger packages with longer deadlines and of course this would often be the case in a classroom setting. Feedback should be provided by your son's teachers in the usual way, though because of the more time-consuming nature of online assessment using Insight it might not come quite as often (once every 2-3 weeks should be the minimum expected). Similarly, if you have a son in Year 12 then you should notice that his teachers are progressively switching over to MS Teams from Insight. MS Teams offers a far more powerful and flexible learning platform with the capability of much more interaction between teachers and students. Of course when teachers progress on to using Teams with their larger Year 7-9 classes there is going to have to be a cultural adjustment, as 'teaching' classes of this size remotely is simply not possible in the traditional sense. We are all learning fast...

Prefects – following a fairly exhausting but utterly uplifting set of interviews on Wednesday afternoon last week we have selected a Head Boy for the 2020-2021 academic year. He, (together with the Head of Sixth and this year's top boys) is now deciding the make-up of the rest of the prefect team. The posts should be announced by Zoe Lambard (Head of Sixth) before the end of the coming week.

Governance - Governors are continuing to work for the benefit of the School and the May meeting was run as a video conference using Teams, which was very successful and with the normal governor attendance. Our Funding Agreement allows meetings to be held by video conference so our governance is now back to normal and the meeting minutes will be available via the website next week.

From Mrs Kimberley (Physics) - some boys are finding this time invigorating and they are flourishing and rising to the challenge of independent learning. Other boys are finding study difficult; please let us know if that is the case via their mentor or form tutor. There is never a win in comparison, every student is an individual and will have strengths of their own. Encouragement or guidance to set small, achievable targets can help bring, what seem insurmountable tasks, back under control. We all know, from experience, that there are times when we adjust our expectations of a day or week in order to be able to stay positive and feel we have been successful. When a student is struggling, they often need help to see the wood from the trees. We can all play a part in this working together to bring out the best in our students and helping them build invaluable skills for life.

Can I remind you of some of the extension links that have been provided via twitter over the past couple of weeks? (the dates are for the tweets on @BWordsworths)

- fantasticfiction.com (17/5/20) - for a list of great reading, including William Golding (of course!)
- hayfestival.com (16/5/20) - the digital Hay Festival 2020, lots of great seminars
- [@sciencemuseum](https://twitter.com/sciencemuseum) (10/5/20) - lots of STEM learning materials
- [@GreatSankeyDofE](https://twitter.com/GreatSankeyDofE) (7/5/20) - lots of ideas for Bronze DofE participants to keep going...
- alumni.cam.ac.uk/news/online-resources (7/5/20) - links to Cambridge museums and galleries

...and, of course, don't miss Mr Ennew's reading of each Poem of the Week – so far John Clare, Philip Larkin and Wordsworth (William that is!) have featured, requests welcomed to @BWSEnglish...

Best wishes



S D Smallwood
Head Master