

16th July 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Friends

Well, we have finally made it to the end of a very difficult year. Never did we imagine, when we set out our new school year in September, that our Year 11 and 13 would finish their school days so abruptly and the rest of our students would be taught from the comfort of their own homes for so long. Our school then became a very sad place as we as lost our wonderful head of history, cherished colleague and much loved teacher, James Furlong.

Along with our colleagues in the history department, we were honored to represent the school at James' funeral on Tuesday. This took place in his home town of Liverpool, in the Metropolitan Cathedral, affectionately known locally as "The Wigwam". The service was beautiful and truly a fitting tribute to James.

We have all clearly been through some challenging and emotional times this year, but what has struck us is the incredible power of our community has to come together and the amazing stoicism of our students.

We are incredibly proud of each and every one of our students as they continued to show real strength and resilience adapting to the ever changing styles of teaching and learning through Covid-19. We are proud also of our staff; our teachers, who maintained their high standards of teaching and expectations throughout, as they embraced Teams and bravely moved from work sheets, to audio presentations to live lessons, and our support staff who carried on behind the scenes keeping things going as slickly as ever.

We have felt incredibly supported by you, our parents throughout the last term, for which we are most appreciative and cannot wait for when we can see you all again!

In the meantime we have some farewells to make; Mr Campbell is leaving us after his temporary post covering a maternity leave in computing which then morphed into a temporary math's post, Miss Head, Miss Crichton and Miss Howgill in the languages department and Miss Roberts in the English department, and finally we wish Ms Wood a happy retirement as she hangs up her famous wicker basket for the last time. Ms Wood has taught Spanish and French at The Holt since 1999 and has inspired many students to widen their horizons and travel the world. The Spanish exchange link that she established more than ten years ago has set up many a long lasting friendship between our students and students in El Bohio in Cartagena. We will really miss her.

If your daughter is at a loose end over the holidays, then Wellington College are running an on line course called the GSL Summer Catalyst @ Home Programme. This programme is an exciting initiative designed to support students during these challenging times and is now available to 11-15 year olds in UK based state schools. This programme is designed by Future Foundations and the Wellington Leadership and Coaching Institute. This online summer programme is free to do and accessible from home.

During the programme your daughters will build leadership and future world of work skills as well as confidence. They can engage in healthy debates with students from other schools and learn how to launch successful projects in their community.

Details:

- Duration: One week live programme – part time 9.45am – 12.45pm (Monday-Friday) - followed by access to 3 weeks of online courses which can be completed in their own time with live support from the GSL team.
- Dates: Three options available
 - Cohort 1: 27th-31st July
 - Cohort 2: 3rd-7th August
 - Cohort 3: 10th-14th August
- Free: The programme is fully funded by Innovate UK (for students who attend a UK state funded school)

Please visit the programme website: <https://www.globalsocialleaders.com/gsl-summer-catalyst-at-home/> for more details and to register.

On Friday at 10am, our student leadership team are holding a final whole school assembly and memorial to Mr Furlong. Your son/daughter has been emailed a link to this assembly that they can click on just before the start.

We have finally made it to the summer holidays...which may well be very different for us all this year, but one thing for sure is that we are all very much in need of a well-earned rest.

We wish you all a lovely summer and look forward to seeing you in September.

Handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Katie Pearce. A Kennedy".

Katie Pearce and Anne Kennedy
Co-Headteachers