

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents, Guardians and Friends

I hope you enjoyed a lovely Bank Holiday weekend...unusual indeed on two counts...firstly, to have a Bank Holiday *Friday* - I quite liked that...and secondly, celebrating VE day in socially distanced front lawn parties instead of the street parties that many people had planned. But one thing we have all learned from this pandemic, is that we need to be flexible about how we do things...we have certainly seen that in the way we have been doing things at The Holt over the last seven weeks, and more of that *flexibility* to come later in the update...!

Here are some key things for this week:

- Year 10 have now completed their “remote” PPEs. Well done to them, and thanks to you for your support in facilitating these! The students can now enjoy a well-earned break from work this week having worked very hard over the Easter holidays. Plus, this gives their teachers a bit more time for marking- as this will also need to be done in a different and flexible way. However, if your Year 10 daughter is at a loose end until work resumes next week, then she has received the on-line learning finance package from Nebula Learning that she can work through. There is also some careers information that Mrs Hart has sent out and lastly, Mrs Williams has sent out some information about the prefect application process that your daughter can make a start on the deadline is tomorrow at 9am.
- Year 7, 8 and 9 students are in their final week of revision before their end of year “remote” assessments, which begin next week. We have learned a lot from the Year 10 exams and are confident that the KS3 assessments will run smoothly, but as ever, we are here on [homestudy@holt.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:homestudy@holt.wokingham.sch.uk) to help if there are any problems.
- Year 12 students and parents have been contacted about the plans for their exams which take place after half term.

You will no doubt have watched, as we did, Boris’s updates on Sunday and earlier in the week about a possible partial return to school for some students. Whilst he was keen in his message that we should be looking to some sort of partial school opening to Year 10 and 12 students before the end of the school year, there has been very little in the way of guidance as to how that works logistically.

To put it into context, writing a timetable for a school year ordinarily is incredibly complicated...it is like the trickiest Sudoku puzzle you have done. It is such a beast, in fact, that we, like most schools actually started putting it together in March! Mrs Harrington, our data manager is amazing at this job, and we are very lucky to have her... So, to write a timetable for Year 10 and 12 to come in to school in classes of no more than 15, spaced away from other rooms, with certain staff at certain times, that don’t clash with other lessons or the rest of our remote teaching, is going to be a challenge!

It is a good thing that we love a challenge! So, another opportunity to be flexible...we are currently planning carefully for what this might look like, for whom and from when. However, we will also be continuing to provide care provision for the children of key workers and those who have additional needs or are considered vulnerable.

It is important to remember that although the date of 1st June has been announced, this is a potential target date which could change. We will be working to this target date to be ready to receive students back into school anytime from 1st June.

However, we work it though, school life will feel very different for us all when we return. Government guidance has been published to support student and staff wellbeing and schools are to take a flexible approach to how this is managed in context.

There may be more changes as plans develop and we will keep you informed accordingly. In short, our focus for reopening will be on keeping everyone safe and well.

We will be writing to you regularly to update you on our next steps and what this means for you and your family. We would be grateful for your patience over the next week as we work through the planning process.

In addition to the DofE, we also receive communications from other agencies and organisations. This week, Mrs Martin one of our Assistant Heads, was contacted by Thames Valley Police and she asked me to pass on this message along with the attached document.

*As a result of Covid -19 restrictions, young people are increasingly using social media to stay in touch with their friends and relatives. I have attached a letter that I received from Thames Valley police containing some important advice about how we can safeguard children and reinforce positive online behaviours. Please can I specifically draw your attention to [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) – this website contains some useful information about online safety for students, parents and carers. If you have any concerns, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with me via your daughter's year team.*

In other news, it has been lovely to hear how our students have been engaging with extra opportunities. We have read some delightful letters they have written to the residents at Glebelands Care Home and seen the lovely replies coming back. Keep the letters coming to [Glebelands@holt.wokingham.sch.uk](mailto:Glebelands@holt.wokingham.sch.uk)

Some of our Year 10 students also took part in the Junior Physics Olympiad exams last week...even during their exam week...! Good on them, and fingers crossed for the results! Thanks Dr Lewis for organising this.

Mrs Williams has also totted up the results of the House cup winner 2020.....are you ready?

In third place, we have Haberdashers.....

In second place, it is Goldsmiths...

And the winners of the House competition 2020 are.....Clothworkers..... their first win in a very long time..... Well done Miss Howgill, and her fabulous prefects for all their hard work and encouragement. The prize is usually a House party on the field for every member of that House...we will have to be flexible and roll that over to when we are all back! Congratulations!

My last bit of news for you, is to congratulate Miss Izod, who is going to be taking over from Mrs Vaughan as Head of Year 7 from 1<sup>st</sup> June. Mrs Vaughan is leaving The Holt after 14 years' service to pursue a role at Reading University in the admissions department. Mrs Kennedy and I would like to thank her for all her hard work and wish her all the best in her new role. We will miss you!

Miss Izod is excited about taking over from Mrs Vaughan and they are spending some time now (socially distanced of course) handing over, so the change is as smooth as possible.

Have a lovely rest of week.

Stay safe!



Katie Pearce  
Co-Headteacher