

20th March 2020

We are in unprecedented times, a phrase that I have been using with every group I have been spoken to this week. We have finished school today for our students for the foreseeable future, exams have been cancelled and our normal work life and routines will now stop. This is indeed unsettling and frightening for everyone. However, what I have seen at Kendrick these last few days, from both students and the staff, is a huge determination to plan and put into place a 'virtual' school and a communications system for everyone in our community. Year 11 and 13, feel very concerned and worried about how their education has come to an abrupt end and all that they have planned and worked towards seems to have been snatched from them. We have spent the last few days reassuring them, that whilst we do not know the detail of how their GCSEs and A Levels will be acknowledged, the school will do everything it can to support them through the process of accreditation over the next few months.

We have been communicating with you regularly in the last few days about how we will manage the remote learning of students. Staff have and will continue to work hard and send materials to students for them to work through. We are operating different approaches for the different year groups, which is being communicated to them via their Head of Year, but all students will receive 'keeping in touch' emails every week from their Head of Year and or Tutor. Additional measures are place to support our vulnerable students. We have strongly recommended to all students that routines are very important to help create some degree of normality for the next few weeks. I hope parents/carers will support their child to find a 'new normal' in their daily life. We must not underestimate how hard this time will be for everyone; it is not a holiday but an enforced period of being at home with one's family in strained circumstances and I hope families can understand and will be empathetic to everyone's needs in the household.

Kendrick will be open to staff who are able to work at school and there will be a skeletal staff in place for the next few weeks. All parents/carers have been sent a form to complete if they require their children to be in school because they are **key workers**. Please respond, as soon as you can, to the survey so that we can put plans in place for the supervision of these children. If you require this provision we will communicate with you over the weekend.

I have had assemblies with all students in these last two days, finishing with Year 11 and Year 13 this afternoon. I have been so impressed by the attitude, resilience and resourcefulness of our students and how they have all quickly mobilised their skills and abilities to put on end of year assembly together to celebrate their life at Kendrick. At the end of my talk to Year 13, I read a poem to them that I have read before to students, which is about being strong and resilient in the face of difficulty and being in control of one's destiny. The poem is **Invictus written by William Ernest Henley** in 1875 and feels apt for both our students and all of us at this time.

Invictus
Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears

*Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.*

*It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.*^[1]

I will continue to send you a **Weekly Update** on Friday, as well as other updates that come into school that you need to be aware of. Also links to avenues of support will be sent. As I have said we will keep in touch with our students regularly and if anyone wants to inform us or speak to us, please use our email address admin@Kendrick.reading.sch.uk

With my very best wishes to everyone, please stay safe and well.

Ms Christine Kattirtzi
Headteacher