

Kendrick School

Weekly Update

Friday 3rd April 2020

WEEKLY LETTER FROM MS KATTIRTZI, HEADTEACHER

I want to begin this week's message with a huge **thank you** to everyone, staff, students and parents, for all that you have been doing to further establish our virtual school. From messages and meetings I have had, some of the initial problems are improving and we are all learning more about the capability of our technology, how to organise our day, both work and recreation and how to better live and get on with our family members. I think what we all miss, is the social interaction of our school community; the hustle and bustle of school life, the conversation, discussions and chat that fill our day, the fun activities, as well as the support and encouragement we give each other. I hope everyone is able to find some ways in which they are filling this void.

If we were in school today, as it is the last day of term, we would have started the day with a **Whole School Assembly**, in the Hall, our most iconic meeting place where so many of our best occasions take place. At this time of the year we would receive reports from our **House Captains**. We would also have a few tense moments as we announced the winners of the **House cup 2019-20**. Unfortunately we aren't able to do exactly that this year, instead the three staff leaders, Mr Simmonds, Mr Stride and Mr Jacob had a virtual meeting with the House Captains, Candice, Katie and Anna Mae, and Vice Captains Lucy, Frances and Siwani yesterday and decided the way ahead. They agreed to count tokens and add in the points awarded for events in order to decide the winner of the House Cup. This is scheduled to happen in the first couple of weeks after school reopens, whenever that will be. This will then end the House Year 2019-20 and the start of the next House Year will begin, 2020-2021. At this time we will also relaunch the election of new vice captains. Each House is putting together a **celebration assembly presentation** to be shared with the school in the second week of next term. The incoming captains are looking forward to planning next year's events.

Our House round up would then be followed by our **Head Girl and Deputy Head Girl** making a speech to the school summarising what they have done over the year as a **Head Girl Team**. I am delighted that the team has been able to put this presentation together for you. Please click on this [link](#).

I would like to formally thank this year's team: **Louise, Serena, Mia, Amy, Zainab, Gaby, and Simran and House Captains Candice, Katie, Anna Mae**. They have been a superb team and been completely dedicated to working and supporting students across the school. They have been brilliant ambassadors for Kendrick and together with other students in the 6th Form they have been superb role models and enriched the life of our students and our community. It is unfortunate that some of their most recent events had to be curtailed, we mustn't forget all that they managed to do from April 2019, more than makes up for the few things they have not been able to complete in the last few weeks. Our grateful thanks to them all.

At this time of the year I also mention some of the other achievements and activities of students, but it seems so many of our most recent plans have had to be postponed or cancelled, including trips, events, meetings, competitions and our most wonderful concert that we have at this time of the year. Also at this time of the year as we end a term, I also formally thank the groups in our community.

Our Students: I want to say again how impressed and proud I am of all our students. From reports and meetings I have had with staff, I can see that students are adapting to this new learning environment showing, amazing and resilience and cooperation. They have risen to the challenge of remote learning, they are responding to their teachers and are trying to make this 'new normal' work as best they can. My wholehearted thanks go to each and every one of them. A summary of what all the students have been doing in the last two weeks is below.

All students have been receiving two emails a week from their Head of Year. All students have been receiving work from their teachers. Students who need extra emotional support are receiving this through our counsellor and School Nurse.

- Years 7 and 8 have engaged well with their tasks and developing good routines
- Year 9 have completed their Year 10 option choices and working well
- Year 10 are continuing with their GCSE course content
- Year 12 are doing the same and, in addition, they will be hearing about the launch of the EPQ after the holiday
- Years 11, 12 and 13: We working through how we will be gathering and sending the data to the boards. As I said last week, **Mr Simmonds, Deputy Head** will be communicating with students and parents in Years 11, 12 and 13 with regard to how we are proceeding with the process.

Our Staff: my thanks to all our staff; our brilliant teaching staff who like our students are accommodating their teaching to fit this new virtual world. I am hearing about all the google classrooms set up, and the many other ways that work is being taught and delivered, as well as assessed. This too is not easy, as many staff have their own family and household to manage as well as their teaching work. Our **amazing admin and finance** staff are also doing all they can to keep the school going, as well as working on the plans for the future and the new academic year. Our **dedicated caretaking staff** are also regularly in school making sure the site is safe. As you would expect, our new building is now on hold and so unlikely to be ready for the start of the next academic year.

Our Parents/Carers. My thanks also to parents, I know that parents are, of course, doing what they can in their households and, no doubt, experiencing some challenges. I hope patience and forbearance is the approach that the adults are taking and supporting their children. Parents are also having to deal with their own work, which for many, is changing and possibly people's jobs are under threat. This is not an easy time for families, I know.

Our Governors: I would also like to thank our governors for their support. I am having regular meetings with the **Chair of the Governing Body**, Mrs Jan Nowecki, updating her on our business continuity plan. We have agreed that the next round of governor meetings in May will go ahead, remotely, and as planned on the calendar.

As we approach this holiday, I would be telling all students and staff that I want them to have a complete rest from work for a good part of the holiday. I am saying the same again this year. At our Extended Leadership Team (remote) meeting this week we agreed the following:

- Years 7, 8, 9 there is no school work
- Years 10 and 12: they should use the holiday to catch up and consolidate on work
- Year 11 and 13 to continue to complete their GSCE and A Level courses as directed by their teachers

Recreation: Obviously this is limited for this holiday, but there are plenty of things that people can do from home to access the world and interesting places remotely. A huge list of suggested activities is on the end of this letter, including our **Holiday Booklet** that we send out for holiday times, adapted for activities you can still do at home. Please may I ask that parents support us in this important period of rest and recuperation for everyone.

I always end my assembly with some moments of reflection, which I would like to do with everyone today.

Below is what I would want to say to our students and staff if we were all gathered together in the Hall. Perhaps, students and staff, you can try to imagine us altogether in the Hall, as I am doing now. Year 7, 8 and 9 would be sitting right in front of me in the gym, Years 10 and 11, behind them in the Hall and the 6th Form and staff on the chairs and at the back of the Hall and in the Balcony. We probably would have listened to some beautiful music, probably an item from the concert. I would then say, let us all reflect for a few moments...

Let us think of this time of year and remind ourselves of the purpose of the holiday we are about to have. It is the holiday which marks the most solemn but most joyous of Christian festivals, Easter. As they think about the last days of Jesus' life on earth, Christians face up to the worst that human life can bring, but also see the best that it can be.

In these last few weeks and as each day goes by we are experiencing the worst that can happen to people, the pandemic of the COVID 19 s which is a threat to all of us. Every day we are hearing of the hundreds of deaths in our country and the thousands of deaths globally. However, we are also seeing the best of people in the way they are responding to this situation. Our wonderful NHS staff and health care workers are risking their lives to help the sick and dying, day in day out, and we thank them most sincerely for all that they are doing to help people, who could be our family or friends, at this most desperate time.

*Let us think of our own lives - looking at the things that have gone well, putting behind us the things which have not gone so well. Let us also think about how we need to manage and deal with these challenging times and what **small, great thing** we can individually do for the collective good. At Kendrick we have given 200 pairs of goggles and 800 pairs of gloves to the Royal Berkshire Hospital, we have offered our 3D printer for use in making protective face masks and we are opening our car park to NHS workers. Individually, we can all try to be more patient with our family, we can try to be more kind to each other. We can think of the people who may be feeling alone or lonely and isolated in their homes. We can call them or contact them and offer what help we can. The Easter season is about the message **of hope and love**. In all we do over the next few weeks and months, let us try to demonstrate hope and love to our family, friends and others, however, close or far they are from us.*

Thank you.

To everyone I wish you a peaceful holiday; keep safe and well,

Ms Christine Kattirtzi, Headteacher

SAFEGUARDING & SUPPORT AVENUES

We have created a library of resources for parents, carers and students including support avenues which you can find on our website via this [link](#). We will be adding to these on a regular basis.

KENDRICK SCHOOL COMMUNITY DURING COVID-19

Below are links to news, activities and initiatives which are helping us recreate the Kendrick community in a virtual world. If you have anything you would like to add here that you are personally doing or doing as a group, please email aemberson@kendrick.reading.sch.uk

[Kendrick Arts Instagram](#)

ENRICHMENT AND WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

As well as enrichment activities and newsletters being produced by Kendrick School, there a lot of information, resources and activities being promoted and advertised online and on social media to help get us all get through these difficult weeks. We will include ones that we are aware of on our website via the link below, and if you know of any that you would like to promote then please let us know. IMPORTANT NOTE – Kendrick School is not responsible for the content of the external activities or resources.

[Kendrick School Wellbeing and Enrichment Resources](#)

[Kendrick School Coronavirus Library Newsletter](#)

[Kendrick School 'Of the Week'](#)