



Battle Abbey School
Battle
East Sussex
TN33 0AD
Telephone 01424 772385
Facsimile 01424 773573

Headmaster: David Clark, BA, M Phil (Cantab)

1st May 2020

Dear Parents,

It is hard to believe that we are now in May and, to date, there appears to be little coming from government in terms of an exit strategy. However, looking back over the last few weeks, I can't help feeling that we have been pretty lucky here in East Sussex as we have experienced what I can only describe as a 'very British lock-down'. By that, I mean that the measures imposed have not been too restrictive and the forces of law and order have been fairly gentle in their approach – in sharp contrast to the rather draconian measures adopted in other countries.

My intention is to contact you each Friday for a quick update on things and also to discuss issues we are facing as well as our plans for the future. Firstly, I am keen to inform you that we had a very productive governors meeting yesterday and we will be contacting you all next week with a financial update and news on fees. It is also important to remind you that next Friday is a Bank Holiday, so there will be no virtual teaching available and I hope that everyone - parents, students and teachers enjoy the extended weekend.

As far as virtual learning is concerned, I fully sympathise with the challenges being faced by every family. With three boys aged 8, 4 and 2, I know only too well how difficult it is to juggle work and home-schooling and I am amazed how well we have adapted as a family to the new routines. It is worth reminding you that many of our teachers have young children too and they are, at times, finding it really difficult to cope with the additional demands and I am so grateful to you for your support and understanding if things don't always go 100% smoothly. Despite the hardships, we are developing real skills in offering on-line teaching and Mr. Austen-White will be contacting a team of parents and students soon to ask for detailed feedback on what has worked well and on what needs improving. Additionally, I am grateful to Mr Usher and to Mrs Johnson who, between them, have reached out to the Year 13 students as they put together a programme to support our leavers and Mr Usher will be in touch with Year 11 parents and students early next week with plans for their new curriculum offering.

Our virtual lives are certainly different to what we are used to but some positive things have emerged since schools have closed. Parents, as well as students are now getting a fuller glimpse into what actually happens at school and can now watch assemblies and a host of other interesting items downloaded onto our social media platforms. You will also have the chance to view one of the weekly mini lectures that will be posted and delve into the world of bees by logging on to Miss Mal's regular videos entitled 'Live from the Hive'. Your children will be able to show you some of the other offerings when they click onto BAS TV and I am particularly grateful to Mr Dennett for all his efforts in enabling us to share in the exploits of Virtually Battle Abbey.

Before moving on to some business matters I would like to pay tribute to our new Maths teacher, Mr Jo Carthew who has done a sterling job of adjusting to our virtual teaching protocols in just a few short days. I would like to share with you a lovely message I received about him from a parent – no surprise really, as Mr Carthew was recently named as Rother Teacher of the Year:

Just wanted to quickly email to say that both B and L have had online lessons with the new maths teacher and have loved the lessons. They both like his way of teaching and have both come away with only positive comments. Must be difficult for a new teacher to meet his students online first and get the lessons going and of course massive shoes to fill. B is even convinced he now recognises her voice!

Next, a few matters for your consideration:

- The Y11 booklet & options is imminent
- Thanks are due to the Year 13 for feedback on their post A level programme
- Please ask your children to stay in touch with tutors (weekly) and the welfare team (if required)
- Please be patient with us in terms of turning around e-mails – as email traffic has increased hugely in recent weeks

Finally, a few reminders about upcoming dates:

- Next Friday is a bank holiday
- Monday's assembly by Mr Mercer will be on-line to view from the afternoon
- House messages and student voice will be available on Wednesday
- 6th form enrichment will take place on Thursday (not Friday)
- Year 10 reports will be sent out w/c 11th May

I hope that you all have a lovely weekend and that, amid your virtual commitments, you have quality time with those closest to you.

Best wishes,

David Clark