



The King's School

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THE KING'S SCHOOL

3 April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer & Student,

In follow-up to the letter sent by the CEO, I wanted to touch base with all of you to provide an update with what has been going on specifically at The King's School. I hope that you are all safe and well and are managing to navigate through what is a very strange situation! I have certainly learned a great deal in recent days and weeks and we have had to adapt significantly to communicating remotely with both staff and students – video conferencing has become the norm and an interesting experience for all involved!

I would like to thank you again for your understanding and continued support for the school. It has been pleasing to receive positive feedback from parents with regard to the work that has been set on Show My Home Work/Google Classroom and I hope that the communication you receive continues to be welcomed and informative.

Teachers and school leaders have been busy continuing to plan for the new curriculum that will be in place from September and ensuring that we continue to provide a first class experience for all students of The King's School. Whilst we all appreciate that the measures taken at a national level are to keep us safe at a trying time, we are all looking forward to returning to normality in the future and welcoming students back to school. The old adage 'you don't realise what you have got until it is gone' seems particularly relevant at the moment and I know that all staff are missing the daily interactions with the incredible students who make The King's School a special place to be.

Home Learning

I know that you have been receiving plenty of work to support students with their home learning. I would like to say thank you to parents/carers for all that you have been doing to keep learning going during this time. We know that everyone is doing their best - please do not worry if everything is not complete. These are tough times and we understand the different pressures that each family may face. Our advice would always be 'best endeavours'. We are setting work, but if there are obstacles to completing it, all we can ever ask of anyone is that they try their best.

It is still early days and we are doing our very best to find the right solutions to continuing your child's education during this unprecedented period of school closure. The work that we are setting and the methods we use will continue to evolve, although be assured that we will keep you and students updated and supported at each stage.

After Easter, we will continue to set home learning for all our students through 'Show My Home Work' (SMHW). This will continue to be the main communication and platform for setting all work, and a full week of home learning will be provided every Monday. Alongside SMHW we will also be using Google Classroom and a number of other online educational software packages. Teachers will assess students understanding over this period of time through a variety of ways such as online quizzes and self-marked tests, but we will also request key pieces of work to be submitted online for assessment, where appropriate.

As well as academic subject work being set by teachers, we know how important it is for children to develop in other ways too. There are already and will continue to be optional creative projects for students to dip in and out of, recommendations to learn a new skill, links to online classes and documentaries, and activities linked to mental wellbeing.

We will continue to do our best to send work and support you but know that there are many alternative ways to learn new skills and develop as young people during this time at home. Please keep sharing your home learning activities so that we can share them with the school community on Twitter. Tag us on Twitter with @KingsPontefract. It is a wonderful opportunity to keep in touch as a community. Please keep them coming!

Easter Holidays

Students will not be set classwork by their teachers during the Easter holidays in the same way as we have so far. It is important for students to be able to relax during the break and the current situation means that many families won't have the same Easter holidays they are used to and plans will likely have been cancelled. However, acting on feedback we have received, parents/carers have expressed gratitude for us providing resources that have helped students maintain a routine. Therefore, each subject area have provided 'Easter Engagement Materials' which is project/task based for students to complete. This can be dipped in and out of and will maintain learning in a fun and creative way. An example of this from English involves students being required to engage with a Nando's style challenge! Hopefully this support you over the holidays with different activities to do, as individuals or as families.

Year 10 Students

I understand that many of our students, particularly Year 10, will be concerned about the impact the school closure will have on their GCSEs next year. Please be reassured that every student in the country will be in the same position and the important thing is to complete their home learning to the best of their abilities. Students can ask their teachers for help through SMHW if they require further support or request additional work if they want to stretch themselves further.

Teachers will be in regular contact with parents if they feel Year 10 students are at risk of being behind with work. We want all students to have the best chance of reaching their full potential in Year 11. Our teachers will also be using their time not only to plan varied, interesting and engaging work for students to be doing at home, but also to consider how we can adjust what we do when they return to school to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by this closure, and maximise their individual progress.

On-Site Provision for Children of Key Workers

Please note that provision at Carleton High School will continue during the Easter Holidays. This includes Good Friday and Easter Monday for a very small number of students of Key Worker families who absolutely require this provision to allow them to continue providing frontline services. We very much appreciate the understanding that schools should be a last resort at this time and any child who can stay safely at home should do so, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

Feedback on Home Learning

We recognise that this method of learning is new for everyone and whilst initial feedback seems very positive, we are keen to hear your opinions in order to inform our next steps. Put simply, if certain things need changing and improving, then we need to know so that we can act upon it swiftly. We would greatly appreciate it if you (we encourage both students and parents to fill this in together if possible) could possibly take 5 minutes to fill in this survey found here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/TRH3GYD>

Award of GCSEs

I wrote to students in Year 11 last week to provide an update and mentioned that schools were awaiting further guidance from the government, Ofqual and the exam boards as to how grades would be awarded. There has been an update today provided from the government <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcses-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020>.

I will update parents/carers with further details once we have had the opportunity to digest the information.

Finally...

In a world where we are all operating 'online' there are various ways in which technology has had a positive impact in keeping us connected. However, you will have no doubt seen some reports that certain Apps have created issues in terms of safeguarding. We encourage students to stay connected but please be mindful of the certain risks this may carry.

Thank you once again for your support. Please stay safe, take care and keep well. I hope that all families have the opportunity to have an Easter break, spend time with loved ones and have respite from the virtual world we are currently living in.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dominic Pinto', written in a cursive style.

Mr Dominic Pinto
Head of School