

Borlase@home

19 June 2020

Dear Parents

Thank you so much for supporting your child through the assessments over the last two weeks. It must be very different for them sitting tests online but I know that their teachers have been very impressed by the way they have engaged. The feedback they receive will help them and us know how to move forward but they should all feel very proud of the way they have been carrying on with learning in Borlase@home. We will be sending Orders out to you in the first week of July. They will look slightly different as we will communicate whether your child is secure or needs some additional support in topics rather than award grades. We feel this is not an environment to give out judgements; it is a learning opportunity for us all to go forward.

This half term there are some extra activities organised for years 7-9 as a break from assessments and lessons. Year 7 has the STEM in Action Day; there are creative writing opportunities for Years 7-9 and a digital discovery day on careers for year 8. As we move towards the end of term, we will explore some further enrichment opportunities. I hope too that they are taking advantage of the opportunity just to get out in the fresh air.

As a school we are committed to completing the online assessments that we have put in place across the school with years 12 and 10 starting theirs over the next two weeks. It is then our intention to bring Year 10 into school for the week of June 29th. This is allowing us to teach on site the students who will face their GCSE examinations next summer. This also gives us as a school the opportunity to deliver “hybrid” lessons to students which may be the pattern of how we move forward in September. We would all hope to be back fully in school but if the trajectory of easing restrictions continues as expected, we are preparing ourselves for every eventuality. We know that we are confident running a school-based education and we have learned how to support the children successfully through Borlase@home. We are now going to develop our skills and systems for delivering education successfully where we may have a combination of students learning in school and through Borlase@home at the same time. We have set out our classrooms for 2 metres distancing, and put in place a wide range of measures to support social-distancing and improved opportunities for hygiene. This includes hand-sanitizer dispensers, outdoor sinks, one way systems, maximum room capacities, infrared thermometers and a range of other measures.

Teachers have been developing ideas for teaching year 10 where some students are in school and some learning alongside them through Borlase@home. This is taking an investment of time from them and we are identifying the technology we need to support

this. On that note, I would like to say an enormous thank you to everyone who has managed to continue supporting the Here and Now fund in these difficult times which is helping us develop our resources.

Years 7-9 will not be returning to school this term but we know we will learn from the work with Year 10 and very much look forward to being able to give them as full an experience of education as possible when they return in September. Key Worker School will remain open for anyone in Years 7-9 who needs to be in school for internet access or for a quiet, working environment .

We are monitoring guidance on sports with excitement. Our new netball courts and hockey astroturf are ready to be used and Colonel's Meadow is sizable for socially distanced activity. We are interviewing for a new Director of Rowing next week and the boats are being repaired and reconditioned for the new season.

I am also exploring the idea of having a very large marquee as a further solution for having large, airy spaces for students to learn and do activities. If anyone has any contacts at all with marquee companies who might be able to help us, even for a term, I would love to hear from you. We could accommodate a 200m2 marquee on Colonel's Meadow without limiting sports space and this would give us great flexibility to have more students in school at a time.

Thank you once again for your continued support. We are incredibly grateful to the way you have encouraged your children to sustain their motivation. I hope there will be opportunities for you and them to gradually inch back, safely, into more normal activities in readiness for starting afresh in September.

My very best wishes,

Kay Mountfield
Headteacher

