



BEECHEN CLIFF

15th May 2020

Message from Headmaster

Dear Parents and Carers

It is now eight weeks since the lockdown began and, whilst there is clearly a move towards getting people back into the workplace, the issue of schools and the potential for opening up to pupils, remains an area for debate. Hopefully you managed to look at the letter sent by Alun Williams recently and will therefore be aware of the preparations underway for a return of some year groups or parts of year groups across the Trust. The first 'wave' of children returning will be in the primary schools, as you know, the intention being that Year 10 pupils and Year 12 students will have the opportunity for some form of 'in-school' interaction before the end of the Summer Term. Obviously we will keep you informed as outline plans become clear intentions.

For pupils in other year groups the message is very clear; make the most of online learning opportunities and interact with your teachers as effectively as possible to try and make the most of the experience.

Across the school much of the preparation work is, as always, around making sure that everything is ready for September. The timetable has been completed, plans for curriculum developments written and site work schedules prepared. An outline induction programme is being prepared for the new Year 7 boys who, once appeals have been completed, will be itching to get into their new school and to feel at home as quickly as possible. Hopefully, despite obvious limitations, we can make this as meaningful as possible.

Just to remind our pupil body how much they are missed, a short video (directed by Ms Sullivan) has been produced and is available to view on the school website, a shortened version being posted on our twitter feed. The key message is that we are looking forward to their return and to ask them to look forward to the many events and activities which make Beechen Cliff what it is.

Mr A Davies
Headmaster

New Arrivals



Despite everyone being in lockdown it is reassuring to know that real life has continued. Over the past few weeks our Beechen Cliff 'family' has grown.

Mr Anstey and wife welcomed a daughter Rosemary on Friday 27th March

Mr Newall and his wife welcomed a son Jago to their family on Monday 4th May.

Mrs O'Higgins and her husband welcomed their son Charlie on Monday 4th May.

Mrs Ingram has shared that her son Charlie, an ex-pupil of Beechen Cliff welcomed his first child a son Leo, on Wednesday 6th May, making her very proud new grandma.

All babies (and parents!) are doing well.

Huge congratulations and best wishes to all.

The Compassionate Communities Hub

The Compassionate Communities Hub - a one-stop helpline for anyone in need - public or professional - during this Covid-19 crisis.

Need support? Call Helpline **0300 247 0050**

9am-5pm, 7 days a week



Year 9 GCSE options

All Year 9 pupils will be contacted after the half term holiday with information regarding their GCSE options for next academic year.

Mr T D Markall

Deputy Head (Curriculum)

Coping during Covid-19 - 21 Productive Things to Do While Social Distancing

The switch from your everyday busy life at school to one mainly indoors all day is undoubtedly frustrating. However, there are plenty of ways to fill your time during lockdown – read on to find out 21 of the most productive things you can do while social distancing...

Learn a language

I'm not suggesting you become fluent in Mandarin by the time the lockdown finishes (keeping up with school languages is hard enough) but learning the basics of a new language using apps like [Duolingo](#) can be a productive (and fun!) way to pass the time and keep your mind sharp.

Learn sign language

Knowing the basics of sign language is a valuable skill to have, and [British Sign Language](#) are offering 'pay what you can' courses during the coronavirus pandemic to encourage more people to learn how to sign.

Organize your notes

This might not be the most thrilling way to pass the time, but now you're not running around on the school field, you can finally organize all those loose bits of reading material and lesson notes floating around your room.

Start a reading challenge

If you're the sort of person who thrives off set goals, a reading challenge is a great way to up your literary intake. [Goodreads](#) allows you to set and track a reading target, and you can connect with like-minded book fans for recommendations.

Repair Shop! An antidote to throwaway culture!

With the growing popularity of the tv show *The Repair Shop* during lockdown where items are resurrected or restored – have a go at home; fix an old bike, a clock, an instrument or an item of broken crockery, a real parent pleaser!

Reading not your thing? Try an audiobook

[Audible](#) are offering hundreds of titles completely free of charge, from *Jane Eyre* to *Winnie the Pooh*. Give it a go!

Join an online choir

In the wake of the coronavirus outbreak, online choirs like *The Sofa Singers* have been created to foster a sense of connection between people and to relieve anxiety (you can find out more about them [here](#)). Even if you're a terrible singer, it's hard to feel stressed when you're blasting out *Whitney Houston* at top volume.

Do an at-home workout

Even if, like Mr Davies, you think exercising is The Worst, it's vital to keep your body moving, particularly if you're only able to leave the house for a short time. There are online workout tutorials for all levels on YouTube – try Joe Wicks daily workout if you haven't yet done so, it's good fun!

Boost your general knowledge

Eventually, you'll be back at school and in the lunch queue being asked questions by Mr Davies, and you might as well use this time stuck inside to learn some facts that'll come in useful for this or for a future tutor quiz. Websites like [Sporcle](#) have a great selection of online trivia quizzes to try out – who *doesn't* want to learn all 44 countries of Europe off by heart?

Listen up

Try some podcasts for a change! If you're into sport there's a brilliant one [here](#). Some excellent growth mindset ones for all the family [here](#)

Take a virtual museum tour

Many of the world's top museums can be visited virtually through [Google Arts & Culture](#), with the added bonus of not having to queue or jostle with fellow art-lovers to get a good view. Gift shop sadly not included.

'Visit' the wonders of the world

Take in some of the most impressive landmarks in the world from the comfort of your sofa: *The Guardian* has a great round-up of must-see virtual tours [here](#).

Learn how to code

Remember how you always said you wanted to learn how to code? Your time has come. Check out free programming courses on [Codecademy](#) [here](#).

Learn how to cook

Maybe you're already the Nigella Lawson of your family, or maybe you set off the fire alarm cooking pasta. Either way, this is a great time to expand your repertoire of meals (even if most ingredients come from a tin). Check out Jack Monroe's [website](#) for great, budget friendly bites.

Learn a craft

There are countless crafts you can turn your hand to, helping to soothe your mind while also (hopefully) producing something beautiful. Check out the myriad crafting communities on YouTube and Instagram for ideas.



Watch documentaries

Let's be real, you're probably spending a lot of time watching TV or on social media at the moment. You might as well expand your knowledge by picking one of the many documentaries Netflix has to offer, on subjects as wide-ranging as politics and pizza.

Help people

Although it's frustrating being stuck indoors for the majority of the day, you're helping people just by staying put. However, if you want to take a more active role, you could do a leaflet drop to neighbours who may be struggling to get to the shops for essentials, provided you are safe to do so. Make sure your parents know what you are doing.

Deep clean your room

Almost certainly the most boring thing on this list. Guaranteed to make you feel better and like you've achieved something amazing. Great points to score with parents too! They might even pay you for doing it!

Keep socially active

It's so important to keep in touch with people to avoid loneliness. As you're still doing school work, consider setting up online study groups with mates to bring some semblance of normality to your week - it's just like being at school (sort of!)

Get green-fingered

If you're lucky enough to have a garden, or even just a balcony, take advantage of the soothing properties of gardening. If you plant herbs, you'll even have a ready-made garnish for all those lovely meals you'll be making (or your bowl of cheesy pasta).

Take time to be entirely unproductive

It's ok to feel frightened and like you just want to curl up in bed with the sheets over your head. While it's great to fill your days and feel productive, taking time to really chill out is essential for your mental health too. But not for days on end!

Stay positive - there will be an end to this time and we're all looking forward to seeing you again!

Mr K Mann
Assistant Headmaster
Head of Pastoral Care

Year 8 and Year 9 Immunisations –UPDATE

Parents will be aware that recent booked Year 8 HPV and Year 9 DTP/MenACWY immunisation sessions were cancelled due to the current pandemic. Virgin Care Services want to re-assure parents that this service will continue for all eligible children when they do return to school and, following national guidance, when the immunisations can be completed safely.

The School Age Immunisations Team at Virgin Care Services have written to all Year 8 and Year 9 parents to reassure them and this letter was emailed via ParentPay on 13th May.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact vcl.immunisations@nhs.net

School Age Immunisations Team
Virgin Care Services Limited
Telephone: 0300 247 0082
e:VCL.immunisations@nhs.net
w: www.virginicare.co.uk

Virtual Sports Day

The PE department will be running a Virtual Sports Day where all the family can get involved. Individual and house prizes will be awarded. More details to follow shortly.

Mr K Mann
Assistant Headmaster
Head of Pastoral Care

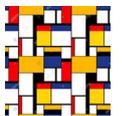
Art Workshops

Calling all budding artists!

Art Enthusiasts London are offering workshops priced at £3.50 looking at various artists and styles. A great way to learn about new artists and discover new skills!

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/art-enthusiasts-london-12917494907>

Mrs J Judd
Art



Teaching and Learning Update

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

I hope that you have had another successful week of home learning. I know that lots of you have now settled in to a routine with this and your sons and daughters are working their way through their lessons and submitting their work to their teachers on a daily basis. However, I know from having spoken to some parents and students, and from the feedback I am getting from our wonderful tutor team who have called all of their tutees this week, that some of you are facing some ongoing difficulties with the online learning we are providing. I would like to address some of these difficulties/concerns:

- ◆ Some students are finding it difficult to organise all of the work they need to complete and are finding the amount of work overwhelming - Your son/daughter may find this easier to manage if they worked to their normal school timetable. This would help to organise their time for them and give them a structure to work to. If they get to the end of the week and have not fully finished all of the tasks, they can still submit what they have done and send a comment to their teacher on Google Classroom to let them know that they have done what they could manage in the 1, 2 or 3 hours they would have spent in that lesson had we been at school.
- ◆ Some parents and students are finding the use of both Show My Homework and Google Classroom confusing - a reminder that teachers are still posting work on Show My Homework so that parents are able to view the work if they wish to. The students themselves should only need to login to Google Classroom, as all of their work and the resources they need to complete it are being posted there.
- ◆ Too much screen time - You may want to encourage your son or daughter to complete some of their work by hand and upload photographs of their hand written work to the Google Classroom, instead of completing it as a Google Doc. This might not be possible in all cases, but will be for lots of lessons and would allow your son/daughter some time away from their computer or phone screen.
- ◆ Feedback - Please ask your son or daughter to show you the feedback they are receiving from their teachers in the Google Classroom or via email.
- ◆ Video lessons - Guidance from the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership remains that live video lessons should not be carried out due to a number of safe-guarding, practical and equality of access concerns.

However I am seeing an increase in the number of lessons being set where teachers have recorded themselves over Powerpoint presentations. We hope your son or daughter has found these resources helpful. Next week, we are going to pilot a small number of video lessons for some Lower Sixth groups, with the hope that we may be able to give our teachers the option of delivering lessons in this way after the Half Term break. I will keep you updated on this.

I hope that you have a restful weekend and that your son or daughter continues to make good progress next week, which is the last week of term. I'm sure that our students are looking forward to a well-earned break from their school work during the May Half Term.

All the best,

Ms S Sullivan
Assistant Head (Teaching and Learning)



We wanted to let you know about the launch of **Sustrans Outside In**, a free resource to help parents who are looking after their children at home.

Walking, cycling and scooting are great ways to keep active and healthy in body and mind. During this time where we are mostly required to stay at home, these activities become harder to do. **Sustrans Outside In** provides fun ideas and inspiration for parents to bring education, health and wellbeing activities into their home.

Parents can access resources by registering for our free parent newsletter. Over four weeks, they'll receive weekly videos, themed activities, games and challenges designed by our experienced school officers

If you think these resources would be useful to home schooled students, here is a link to the subscription page www.sustrans.org.uk/Outsideln for parents to sign up.



Thank you in advance for your support. If you have any questions, get in touch at education@sustrans.org.uk. To find out more about Sustrans Outside In visit:

[Sustrans Outside In Information page](#)

All the best from Sustrans



Duke of Edinburgh Award Historical Enrolments

If you enrolled prior to 2019 but have not yet finished your Duke of Edinburgh Award now is a good time to do so.

To complete your Duke of Edinburgh Award each section needs to have the section information filled in and an assessor report.

The assessor report should cover:

The progress you made towards your goals.

What you achieved and the skills you learned.

How frequently you took part in the activity. Please bear in mind that you need to have done an average of 1 hour per week during the section time period.

There are at home quizzes for the expedition section for each level of the award at the links below:

[Bronze](#)

[Silver](#)

[Gold](#)

If you need help, or have forgotten your log on for eDofE, please get in touch at clesslie@beechencliff.org.uk

Duke of Edinburgh Award Active Enrolments

If you enrolled in 2019 some knowledge check quizzes have been put together for you. The quizzes cover the award framework for your level of the award and they can be found here:

[Bronze](#)

[Silver](#)

[Gold](#)

You can research on the internet if you are not sure of an answer.

DofE have made some temporary changes to the award to support participants during the coronavirus outbreak.

Full details can be found <https://www.dofe.org/dofewithadifference/programme-changes>

In short:

1. Participants can now volunteer for family members, for example by mentoring or coaching younger siblings.
2. Participants can now change section activities more than once. Time spent on previous activities will still count towards completion.

If you wish to change section activities you can do so through eDofE.

If you need help or support with DofE contact Mrs Lesslie at clesslie@beechencliff.org.uk

If you have any questions please get in touch.

Many thanks

Mrs Claire Lesslie

DofE Administrator

Theme of the Week

Theme of the week this week is focusing on Families. This is also our equalities theme of the term.

Hopefully lots of families embraced the Bank holiday and took a little extra time last weekend to celebrate VE day. Many streets and neighbours also had social distancing party's, drank tea together and sung together. There is a feeling of extended family at the moment, and people enjoying the friendships they now have with neighbours who may well have been strangers before lockdown. [Click here](#)

Many families are embracing this time together, this positive way of thinking about lockdown was captured in the following BBC article. [Click here](#)

As you know, we work closely with Boys In Mind, and they have put together some wonderful videos with teenagers talking about family life in lockdown.



Enya from our sixth form was involved in the following video, where she shares how she and her family are getting through lockdown together. [Click here](#). Thank you Enya for encouraging people to talk!

Most families would agree that this is a challenging and testing time. Teenagers along with their parents all need their own space, which is hard when all living under the same roof. Getting school work completed, sorting out house hold chores and trying to maintain a sense of normality is difficult. Here are a few links with tips and advice, and also ways in which families can work together to help get through this time.

[7 Ways to Stay Happy and Calm at Home](#)

[Support for Parents/Family Tensions during Coronavirus](#)

[Tips During Lockdown](#)

Stay safe,

Mrs A Wilmott
Head of PSHE

