



Parent Bulletin

Issue 22 | Thursday 2nd April 2020

It's difficult to know exactly where to start following the surreal events that have unfolded over the past 2 weeks and as we continue into this 'new normal' stage in all of our lives.

I hope you are well and are becoming more accustomed to this new style of learning and living. I, for one, have found the shift from my usual routine challenging to embrace and it is difficult not having the opportunity to see our students every day and to be involved in school life - with all the rewards and demands that brings. The students will be welcomed back with open arms once the school doors open again!

Distance learning can be extremely challenging, so a big well done to our students who have endeavoured to complete the work set to the best of their ability, with many going above and beyond expectations. I would like to thank all parents/carers for the support they are providing to their children working remotely during this time. Our students have responded to this change in circumstances with real perseverance, resilience and positivity - you should be very proud.

It was an unexpected and emotional goodbye to our Year 11 and 13 students who displayed amazing strength and dignity in a very difficult situation. We are immensely proud of everything they have achieved and of the young people they have become. We are hopeful to have further clarification imminently on how their qualifications will be awarded and as soon as we have this information we will share it with you and will work together to guide our students towards their next steps.

I would like to thank you all for the supportive messages that we have received throughout this period. Your positive response is greatly appreciated by the whole school team and your kind words are a real boost to morale as we navigate through this uncertainty.

Take good care of yourselves, and enjoy the Easter break with those who are important to you. Keep in touch and please do seek support from us if any help is needed.

Delia Martin
Headteacher

[Click here to access COVID-19 Updates and Resources](#)

Student Welfare Calls

We are very aware that this period of enforced school closure is going to provide a number of difficulties for students and families over the coming weeks. The very different way we are learning to lead our lives will inevitably present us with a number of academic, social and emotional challenges that we need to work together to overcome.

Consequently, throughout this period, we aim to speak with each family once a week to check on wellbeing and to see if there is anything that we can do to support. Most, if not all of you, will have received at least one call by the time of reading and we plan to continue this offer during the school holidays. We will do our very best to resolve any issues highlighted in these calls and strongly believe that this regular contact with school will make it easier for students to return once we are able to reopen the school.

Coronavirus and your Wellbeing

Click here to view [Coronavirus and mental wellbeing guidance from the NHS](#)

Houseparty App

We understand that many students will be looking for ways to socialise with family and friends remotely whilst isolating and recognise the importance of this on health and wellbeing. The Houseparty app is being used to facilitate some of this online socialising so we wanted to share a link regarding some Safeguarding information related to [using Houseparty Safely](#)

Key Workers

We are very proud that we are able to continue providing care for children of key workers who are fighting the crisis and we will remain open for these children over the Easter holidays. We join the nation in applauding your efforts.



#ClapforOurCarers

Headteacher Awards

In our first week of the closure we had an incredible number of Headteacher Award nominations for students and staff both working at home and for those still at school. It is encouraging to see that our students have taken to their online learning in such a positive manner and we really appreciate the hard work from the staff team to provide work to allow our students to continue their learning.

Year 13 Historians Lecture from The Historical Association

Prior to the outbreak, A Level History students were privileged to hear a webinar lecture hosted by The Historical Association. Dr Anna Whitelock from Royal Holloway, University of London, made a persuasive case that Mary Tudor, as the first of England's modern Queens, was a woman of courage and decision in a male world and hence a trailblazer for her more famous half sister Elizabeth I. Dr Whitelock took issue with traditional assessment that the reigns of Henry VIII's children, Edward VI and Mary Tudor faced a 'crisis', arguing instead that young age and gender respectively, proved no serious barrier for Henry VIII's children.

You can read more about Henry VIII and Tudor Life with [Hampton Court Palace History Stories](#)

School Catering, Free School Meals

To help protect those students and staff who are still attending school throughout the closure, we want to ensure that we have the minimum number of people within school at any one time. For this reason, the school kitchen will be closing going forward. If any children of key workers will be attending school from Monday 6th April please can we request that they bring a packed lunch with them. Refreshments and sweet snacks will still be provided.

We are currently working with those families eligible for Free School Meals. If you believe you are eligible but have not had any contact from our Finance Department directly please email secretary@bentonpark.net and we will look into this. Please visit the Covid-19 page on our website for details of further support on offer from Leeds City Council regarding food provision.

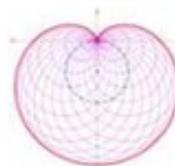
Finance Matters

Please bear with us whilst we work through a number of finance related matters and check out insurance aspects in relation to school trips. We will contact parents/carers separately if refunds are due and these will be made as soon as we are able to do so. Thank you for your patience.

Leeds University STEM Talks

British Science Week took place between 6-15 March 2020, during which time the school celebrated all things STEM - including a series of talks delivered by lecturers from Leeds University:

A group of Year 10 students enjoyed a session on **'Maths has the best curves'** in which they were challenged with a number of questions and tasks looking at various mathematical scenarios that occur in everyday life. The start of the session looked at cardioids so named due to their heart shape. Which included using a mug and a torch to see the shape that could be made by light.



Year 8 students attended a workshop on **'Maths, Spinal Angles and Scoliosis'** looking at the use of Mathematics in Medicine. Working both individually and in small teams, they learned the importance of accuracy and teamwork to come to decisions which in the real world could be life changing. It gave them a real insight into how their Mathematical skills could be used to make a real difference.



Easter Holiday Projects

As we approach the Easter holidays we understand that families need to have some rest and relaxation time. However, what this might have originally involved now looks completely different due to the current situation. Therefore, to reduce the chances of our students getting bored, we have put together a series of projects and challenges for them to complete. It is important to stress that these are entirely optional and we have tried to make them different and fun activities to do. Full details for each project will be shared with students via Teams. We will be having a celebration of the work after Easter where we hope to be able to share some of the projects on our website and social media. We are sure there will be some Headteacher Award worthy nominations too! To stress, this is entirely voluntary and if your child is still working through the work that has been set by their Teachers over the last two weeks then we would strongly encourage them to concentrate on this first.

