

WOOTTON ACADEMY TRUST

Friday 1 May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Our pupils and students have now been studying at home for four weeks, as well as being at home for the two weeks of the Easter holiday that fell during it. Our thoughts are turning to a phased return and what that might look like. Members of the senior team have started to model different scenarios. At the moment we do not know when, and which, pupils and students will be able to return and what it might look like. **What is apparent though is that the way the college and school will operate at least in the short term will be different and built on the advice of gov.uk and others.** As soon as we have agreed an outline plan we will start to share information with you.

In our family of schools, the number of key worker and children identified as vulnerable attending our provision continues to increase. From Tuesday there have been a hundred learners in the five lower schools, two middle schools and at Wootton. Our numbers are now averaging **twelve** children per day.



Pupils completing an enterprise challenge this morning.

Some of the learning pupils in school have been accessing

Today pupils in school completed an enterprise challenge, making origami and selling it for a profit. They all had a fun and competitive morning. On Thursday the pupils had a more artistic morning, tie dyeing t-shirts, working with clay and making some pancakes. Each day pupils are also completing their daily Distant Learning allocation and having a PE lesson, as well as very regular hand washes!

On Tuesday the children accessing the provision at school joined with the staff who were in that day for a minute's silence in memory of workers in the NHS and Health and Social Care who have lost their lives during the pandemic. We thought in particular of three nurses, the nurse from Luton and Dunstable hospital who died very shortly after the birth of her daughter and also two nurses who died in the last week who were twins.

No key workers or other parents/carers whose children are vulnerable need to access our provision next Friday, which is the Bank Holiday to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of VE day. Therefore, next Friday, Wootton Upper School will be closed. Most of the lower and middle schools in the local area have indicated this is the case for them too.

Today we have published the work set this week for all learners at Wootton and Kimberley. [see CV33A]. A number of parents/carers have been in touch to say how helpful it is to see what their children learning in this way.

Connolly Foundation

Forty-two applications for the main award have now been delivered to the Connolly Foundation complete with teacher supporting statements and UCAS statements.

A meeting was held by Zoom to discuss the nine applications discretionary award. The Trust is only allowed to put forward a maximum of six applications for this award and therefore, a team of senior leaders from Kimberley College met to decide which were the most deserving applications. Those six applications have also been delivered to the Connolly Foundation.

Thank you again to Mrs Ashby for overseeing the whole process and all the staff who were involved in any way and of course the Kimberley students who worked hard to complete applications. No decisions on the main awards will be announced by the Foundation until after the publication of A level results in August. We will give you an update in September.

Harpur Trust

The Trust has had a lot of contact with the Harpur Trust this week partly in ensuring that the applications to the Harpur Trust undergraduate bursary scheme were submitted correctly and also because the Harpur Trust is seeking to support schools and families to minimize the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. Firstly, April 30 was the deadline for submitting applications to the Trust's Undergraduate Bursary Awards. Thank you to the teachers who wrote references in support of the three applications submitted by Kimberley College students. [Students are not allowed to apply for both the Harpur Trust award and to the Connolly Foundation as well]. Secondly, the Harpur Trust is starting to talk to all schools and colleges in Bedford Borough about the current and post-lockdown needs they identify for learners.

In particular, the Harpur Trust would like to know how many students in each school and college do not have access to a laptop at home to use for study and also how many students do not have access to the internet, even if they have a lap top. Clearly, if parents/carers have told us they do not have the internet or laptops etc. we will be aware. However, I am not confident everybody has told us their circumstances.

The Harpur Trust is asking schools on whether a scheme to allocate some of its resource to provide lap tops [possibly second-hand machines] for students to use who do not have one themselves and/or to provide students who have a device but no internet, a dongle to enable them to access on-line learning would be useful and if so, how schools could see it working. The Harpur Trust also asked what additional support schools and colleges might need once lockdown ends. Mrs McMorn and I gave our opinion both in terms of the number of young people we feel might not have access to a laptop and also the support learners will need when schools and colleges return after lockdown. In respect of the second of these points we cannot be certain what will be required but we all recognize that learners will have a wide variety of differing needs.

Government Lap Top Scheme

You may have seen or read more of the detail on the government funded scheme to provide lap tops to local authorities and to schools for them to loan to students who do not have them. The government scheme is aimed at children identified as disadvantaged. We understand that:

- ❖ children who have their own social worker should be provided with the use of a lap top by their social worker from an allocation to each local authority intended for this purpose;
- ❖ other children – in Year 10 - who do not have a social worker, but who are identified as being disadvantaged can be allocated a lap top by their school;
- ❖ Wootton Upper School can apply for thirteen lap tops which it can make available to Year 10 children, identified as disadvantaged;
- ❖ these laptops are unlikely to be available before June;
- ❖ the government scheme does not apply to 16 – 19 Colleges, which includes Kimberley College. However, where a college identifies need, it will be allowed to use any 16 – 19 Bursary funding it has received but not yet spent to purchase lap tops to provide to disadvantaged students.

I have asked senior staff to draw up a list of students who do not have access to the internet at home and/or who do not have access to a lap top to enable the Trust to understand the scale of the issue.

If you have a child at Wootton Upper School who does not have access to the internet at home, other than through a mobile telephone or similar device, please let Mr Stewart know by email istewart@wootton.beds.sch.uk or telephone the school on 01234 767123 between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm next week to leave a message for him with our Office Reception.

If you have a child at Kimberley College who does not have access to the internet at home, other than through a mobile telephone or similar device, please contact Mrs Genders, Pastoral Leader, by email ngenders@wootton.beds.sch.uk or telephone the school on 01234 767123 between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm next week to leave a message for her with our Office Reception.

Celebrating Student's Work in the Virtual Gallery

The four assignments referred to in the last newsletter by scholars in the Brilliant Club have been uploaded to the Virtual Gallery on the Wootton Upper School and Kimberley College websites. You will be able to read them in the Key Stage 3 / 4 part of the Gallery in **English Room 2**. Well done again to Ashvin, Niamh, Katie and Will on such stunning pieces of work!

Mr Fink tells me there are well over 120 examples of work now in the gallery.

Mrs Rainford, Head of Textiles, has sent me an example of work which must find its way into the gallery. **Katie Lawrence** in Year 10, has created the most wonderful patchwork quilt. Well done Katie for putting the skills you have learned in Textiles to such good use during lockdown.



Katie's Patchwork Quilt

Students applying to university – Mrs Stewart UCAS Co-ordinator

UCAS has now confirmed that the applicant reply deadline, originally 5 May but extended to 19 May, has been further extended now to **18 June 2020**, meaning offer holders who have not yet responded to their offer have a significantly longer period of time in which to make a decision.

Early Entry UCAS Applications for 2021

Mrs Stewart has sent a number of messages to those Year 12 students who have stated they intend to submit an early entry application to UCAS on SMHW asking them to send her an email to keep in touch and to access the work she is arranging for them. Some of the students have not contacted Mrs Stewart yet by email and we are requesting your support in getting them to engage as soon as possible! Mrs Stewart is worried that if early entry students are not undertaking the secondary reading they need for early entry application it will, very likely, have a detrimental impact on their applications.

Therefore, a call to arms for all parents/carers of Year 12 students who have children intending to apply to:

- ❖ Oxford University or Cambridge University
- or
- ❖ applying to any university to study Medicine/ Veterinary Science/ Dentistry

they should email Mrs Stewart as soon as possible, if they have not already done so and should be accessing the secondary reading as soon as they can.

More information has arrived today to support students prepare for Oxbridge applications.

Moratorium on Unconditional Offer Making

In response to the activities of a small number of universities, the government announced a moratorium on unconditional offers for a period of two weeks from 22 March. This was enforced by UCAS and it would appear that universities have been adhering to this policy. The moratorium was extended for a further two weeks on 6 April and it has been extended for a further two-week period until **4 May 2020**.

Staffing

Mrs Verma, teacher of Information Technology and Computer Science left the Trust yesterday. We would like to thank Mrs Verma for her hard work at the Trust and wish her every happiness in the future.

We appointed a new Head of Modern Foreign Languages on Tuesday subject to the usual pre-employment checks being undertaken. On Monday we are interviewing for Law so assist Mrs Beamish.

Please have a look at the vacancies on the website. We still have posts to fill for September.

Emailing teachers for help

In our survey you told us one of the best ways for us to help your children was for them to know when they could email their teachers and expect a fast response. A reminder of the timetable for this is below and we encourage learners to email their teachers on the days suggested. All email addresses have been shared on the school and college website.

Years	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9 - 11	English, Maths, Science	All other subjects	English, Maths, Science	All other subjects	English, Maths, Science
12 -13	English, Maths, Science, Psychology, Sociology	All other subjects	English, Maths, Science, Psychology, Sociology	All other subjects	English, Maths, Science, Psychology, Sociology

Accessing Word, Excel and PowerPoint files on your home PC, laptop or phone

If your child is struggling to access any of the resources shared via 'Show My Homework' due to not being able to access Microsoft software (e.g. Word, PowerPoint, Excel etc.) **we are able to grant them access to Microsoft Office (using their school email address) for their home computer, laptop or phone etc.** We have been told that some learners trying to access this software are incurring additional costs. If you are currently unable to access this software, please email it@wootton.beds.sch.uk indicating the student's name and we will make the necessary changes.

Please stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Michael Gleeson
Executive Principal
Wootton Academy Trust

Wootton Academy Trust operates:
Wootton Upper School & Arts College
Kimberley 16-19 STEM College
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