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24th April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Summer term update – Year 9

I hope you and your families are all well and you were able to enjoy some of the wonderful weather over the Easter break.

It has been five weeks since your child was last in school and three weeks since I last wrote to you. During this time there have been a number of developments and updates in the Department for Education's (DfE) response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. As families, you have had to adapt and respond to some significant changes, most notably the national school closures. As a school community, we are all working together to support each other, appreciating how the situation will affect us all in many different ways.

Study/work/learning expectations

Since the national school closures, your child has missed three weeks of their normal school routine. At this point in time, we know this will continue for at least another two weeks, but we are anticipating this may go on for longer. This means your child will need to continue their home-based learning until further notice, in order to ensure they are well-prepared for the time the coronavirus (COVID-19) 'lockdown' ends.

We have established a set of protocols for home-based learning and published these on the school website. We hope these have helped you support your child in their learning at home and would like to thank you for all the encouragement and help you have given your child, in the adjustments they have had to make to their learning.

I have asked class teachers to keep records of the work submitted by students in their classes. Three weeks of work should have been set and completed by now and most students have been able to complete and submit the work set. We are aware there may have been some initial technical difficulties experienced by a few students, preventing the timely completion and submission of work, but believe these have all been addressed now. Next week, teachers may need to contact the few students in their classes who are not keeping up with their work and expect these few students to respond appropriately. If you know of any difficulties your child has been experiencing when accessing or completing work, we can resolve such issues, as long as they are communicated to us.

Key Stage 4 options

Mr Davies, Miss Pugh and Mr Jervis have finished going through all the forms completed by Year 9 students, following the Options Evening, early in the spring term. Under normal circumstances, the summer term would see students being interviewed, prior to being allocated their options. Many students have already been contacted already to finalise their option choices. However, there are still some we are yet to contact or we need to call, so please do not worry if we have not yet spoken to your child. By the end of this term, we will have contacted all students, via email or telephone.

Once your child knows their options for next year, they may choose to focus more on the subjects they will be continuing and less on the subjects they will cease to study, at the end of this academic year. We would encourage all students to make the most of all learning opportunities given to them.

They should not stop studying any subjects until they have had their options confirmed and they should not consider any time spent on subjects they will not be studying in Year 10 as wasted time.

Mental health, well-being and other support

As a school, we are monitoring the contact we are having with all our students, this is so we can ensure we have regular communication with your child and all children in our care. This is often in the form of short 'check-ins' with form tutors, but also via subject teachers and work submitted by your child. If you have any worries or concerns about your child, or one of their friends, a good place to go for some initial help and support is your child's form tutor. We have also updated our website, where you will find a range of support options from organisations which specialise in supporting children with their mental health: <https://www.marywebbschool.com/mental-health/>.

If you have serious concerns about the welfare of your child or child known to you, we would always advise you contact the Shropshire Safeguarding team on: 03456789021, as well as contacting our safeguarding team, via email, at: safeguarding@marywebbschool.com.

We have been contacted by organisations in our local community to publicise the support they can offer to families during these challenging times. You will find attached a leaflet from them.

Thank you for all the support you continue to give the school community. It is a challenging time for us all, but through our work together, we can ensure our children receive the support they need. On behalf of the whole school community, I wish you all well and I hope you and your families continue to remain safe.

Kind regards,

PJ Lowe-Werrell

Mr P J Lowe-Werrell
Headteacher

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