

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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26th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Update from the Head, Friday 26th March

It is hard to believe, in this anniversary week, that only just one year ago I stood in the bus park and said a sad farewell to our students as we went into national lockdown. So much has changed in this time and I hope, like me, that with students now back in school you are able to look positively towards the summer knowing that we have not just got through, but grown as learners and as a whole community in the face of such adversity.

Mr Withers has led assemblies this week reflecting on the past year, talking through the necessary procedures that are in place and reminding students of all the layers of support we have available through tutors, our pastoral team and the SSGC.

By the end of today all students will have enough **Home testing kits** to ensure that they can test themselves **twice every week** until the end of April; please do remind them to do this, and to upload their results to the Government site, on **Sunday and Wednesday** evenings. We should know more about the health and safety procedures that educational establishments will be required to follow on our return from Easter.

As we move into the summer term we will also be **returning to our normal school day** after Easter, with afternoon lessons beginning at 1.25pm and **school finishing at 3.30pm**.

Schools are all about change, and we are already beginning our planning for the summer term and the next school year. After nearly 16 years as our Head of Design and Technology, **Mr Barton** has decided to retire after Easter. He has been hugely influential to so many students and we will all miss his classroom presence, technical expertise and good humour, from Year 7 all the way up to the Sixth Form. However, I am delighted to confirm that **Mrs Gibbs** has been appointed to the post, and that Mr Barton has agreed to continue, part-time, to ensure that all examination classes complete their studies and assessment procedures at this difficult time.

After many years building hugely positive relationships with students, and staff, Mrs Gibbs will miss her pastoral role as Head of Year 10, and we will all miss the outstanding care and guidance that she has provided. However, I am very pleased to let you know that **Ms Smith** has been appointed to take over as Head of Year and lead the year group through to the end of Year 11, maintaining the continuity of support that is so necessary at this time.

It was lovely to escape the classroom and catch some of the enjoyment and competition of **House Matches** on Thursday. Well done to the students for such a fantastic turn-out, and thank you to the PE Department for all their efforts and enthusiasm in making it such a memorable, final, event for Year 11. With just Sports Day in mid-June to go, Pilsdon hold a narrow lead over Lewesdon, but with fourth place only 20 points behind it is all still to play for.

With the Easter holidays upon us, students may be interested in the **Raspberry Pi** Foundation project "Does your teen enjoy making things with technology?" They are hosting an exciting, global technology showcase for young people, called **Coollest Projects**. It's online, free to take part in, and open to all young people up to age 18. To get started at home with their free digital making resources just visit the [Coollest Projects website](#) There are more than 200 free, step-by-step [project guides](#) for learning coding at home to explore, or download the free **Coollest Projects workbook** that walks you through the creation process, from brainstorming to picking a project.

Year 8 Progress reports were sent home by ParentMail yesterday. These are intended as an interim report to guide you on the progress students have made so far in this disjointed year, and to set out any key targets for them to work towards in the summer term.

Year 12 assessments will be running next week between Monday 29th and Wednesday 31st March. These will take place in classrooms, during timetabled lessons. Students should all be aware of the topics and content to be assessed for each of their subjects and any special exam arrangements will be taken into account. Details of the **Year 12 Virtual Work Experience programme** are also attached and students are strongly encouraged to start the process early.

Mr See has spoken to all **Year 11 students about the 6th Form application process** today, and given out letters and the **6th Form Options form** which should be returned as soon as possible, and by **Thursday 1st April** at the very latest please. (Copies are attached and are also available on the school website).

As we are not able to host events on the school site, we have set up an online **Year 9 Options Evening** for Wednesday 31st March at 6.30pm using our normal parents' evening booking system. Alongside this, all option subjects have posted short introductory videos to their GCSE courses on the school website at [Year 9 Options Information | beaminsterschool](#) Please do take a look at the wide range of subjects available.

Finally, don't forget that the **clocks go forward** this weekend and that we will all be enjoying some longer evenings.

Mr Hales

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