

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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22nd January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers – **Update from the Head, Friday 22nd January**

As we end another week, and look to revitalise for a few days, it seems opportune to remember Will Rogers' adage: "Don't let yesterday take up too much of today."

And so, as we continue to move forwards optimistically, I remain extremely grateful to you all for the excellent support that you are providing for our online teaching. We are very aware that this cannot replace the classroom and are sensitive to the many challenges that you face. Therefore, please be assured that we continue to refine our work, in response to your feedback, to make it engaging and accessible, with a careful degree of challenge. Staff do not want to overwhelm students and do not expect students to be undertaking work outside of school hours.

You have also been very mindful not to overwhelm us with requests for places in school, thank you. However, we are increasingly busy and trying to support where we know that the need is greatest. Therefore, if your child can work safely and effectively from home, accessing 'Live' lessons and the clear work set out on ClassCharts, **please do keep them at home**. However, if you do need some support then contact your child's Tutor in the first instance to discuss ways that we may be able to help.

Student feedback from the "**Wellbeing Survey**" on ClassCharts has been a very useful additional tool and will form part of our ongoing monitoring and targeted support. Overwhelmingly, and reassuringly, from nearly 500 responses, students feel they are responding well under these difficult circumstances. We will be repeating this exercise weekly and using the feedback in conjunction with all the other monitoring we already have in place so we can assist and intervene quickly should concerns be raised.

You may have seen the media coverage around the efficacy of the **Lateral Flow Device testing programme**. I can confirm that we continue to use these tests as an additional measure of reassurance for staff and students and not as a replacement for the need to isolate should we have a positive case.

We very much appreciated your participation and engagement with the **Year 12 Parent Consultation Evening**. At this difficult time there was a genuine sense of collegiality and assuredness that we are all doing what we can to support each other. Bookings for the **Year 8 Parent Consultation Evening** next Wednesday are now open, with all appointments being held online via video calls, and we look forward to seeing many of you then.

Due to the cancellation of our planned staff training day on Monday 4th January, we have provisionally re-organised this for **Monday 22nd February** (the first day after half term), but this does depend on the outcome of government decisions over the coming weeks. It will be a non-student day but I will confirm this with you before the half-term break.

After a huge amount of effort, commitment and resilience I am delighted to let you know that Year 13, **Ola Megger**, is the first student at Beaminster to complete the **Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award**! Many congratulations to Ola, and we hope that other students will also be able to complete their awards over the next few months.

We currently have **vacancies for 3 school Governors**. No particular qualifications are needed, but enthusiasm and a commitment to help us continue to improve are essential (some financial experience would be useful for one post). If you would like to find out more about this interesting and rewarding voluntary role then please do contact the Clerk to Governors, Tanya Harley on tharley@beaminster.dorset.sch.uk for further information.

Enjoy the weekend.
Mr Hales

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