

BEAMINSTER SCHOOL

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23rd April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers **Update from the Head, Friday 23rd April**

The blue skies and sunshine have certainly helped to provide a warm welcome back for the students this week.

It has been a very successful return to school, with students showing great maturity and understanding with the continued Covid-19 procedures, and I thank you all for your support as we move through this changing landscape.

With the return to a longer lunch time we are also able to **make full use of the school field** which has provided plenty of space to enjoy the fresh air. Please do remember that the **Canteen is now operating a full take-away service** and I attach the menu for the next three weeks.

Year 11 and 13 are responding very positively to the assessment demands placed upon them by the cancellation of this summer's examinations. We are very aware that this is a challenging half-term for the students and we continue to encourage an ongoing dialogue with them. However, please do contact your child's tutor should you have any concerns or require further support.

Following careful planning and development, 37 Year 11 students undertook the practical element of their Food GCSE this week. This required them to produce two dishes for a picnic or brunch, made from scratch within 3 hours along with two accompaniments. The quality of the food produced and presented was exceptional and Mrs Gibbs wanted to pass on her congratulations to them all. The only disappointment has been that due to the Covid restrictions we were not able to taste them!

The **Duke of Edinburgh scheme** is now able to re-start and we had a full day's First Aid training for our thirty Bronze participants today. This will be followed, this weekend, by their first expedition navigating around Beaminster, Broadwindsor and Stoke Abbott. Many thanks to Mrs Randall and our DoE staff team who make all this possible.

Mr Stevens has been very encouraged by the recent **Progress Reports for Year 8** and shared this through certificates in his assembly this week. Where students are getting grades of "Consistently" or "Usually" across all subjects we provide a Headteacher certificate, and where there are just a few "Sometimes" a Head of Year Certificate is awarded. Congratulations to over half the year group for achieving a certificate and we look forward to even more being awarded at the end of the summer term.

The **Dorset Safeguarding team and NSPCC** have asked us to alert you to a serious concern about a current Tik-Tok / Instagram circulation between young people about a 'national sexual assault and rape' day on Saturday April 24th. Police have confirmed that there is **no such event** and it is all being fed by rumour and false reporting.

As we broke up for Easter you will all have been shocked by the testimonies being posted on the Everyone's Invited website, and then reported in the media, about the abuse they faced at different stages of their lives. It is clear that this is a deep-rooted societal problem, and we will continue to work with all appropriate bodies to improve our understanding of the issues, reflect on the work that we do and report any concerns immediately. A new **NSPCC helpline** to support potential victims of sexual harassment and abuse has now gone live and provides both children and adults with appropriate support and advice. The **helpline number is 0800 136 663**. It includes information on how to contact the police and report crimes if they wish as well as providing support to parents and professionals.

The new **Children's Commissioner for England**, Dame Rachel de Souza, has launched The Big Ask – the largest ever consultation with children aged 4 to 17 in England. It aims to find out children's concerns and aspirations about the future, so that we can put children at the heart of our country's recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Please do encourage your child to participate. Parents, care leavers and those working with children are also invited to complete the adult survey to share their views about the future for children and young people today, and what they think is holding young people back.

Congratulations to the **Prout Bridge Project** who are thrilled to have reached their target to secure an **outreach vehicle and staff** to help provide much needed services in our community! Their campaign is open until next Friday and they are still keen for your support: crowdfunder.co.uk/pbpreachingout

We are delighted to have made first contact with our **new Year 7 students for September**. All new parents have been sent a link to formally confirm their place and we will be sending out further information to them all in the coming weeks.

Finally, I was delighted to hear from **Councillor Craig Monks** that the Beaminster skatepark, after much effort and investment, has had a very successful opening. He particularly wanted to pass on his thanks to our pupils for their supportive and respectful behaviour towards younger children and residents at our new skate park.

I wish you all a restful and enjoyable weekend.

Mr Hales

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