



The Manor
Preparatory School

To All Parents

Thursday 7 May 2020

Dear Parents

Weekly Update

From all of my communications with staff and families this week, it feels as though the mood is shifting into a place of settling into our new routines. Remote Learning is the new normal, although we do hope that it is not for too much longer as we recognise the extra pressures and strains that it puts on all members of The Manor community. We remain incredibly grateful for all the messages of support that you have been sending through as well as the way in which you continue to support your children and our teachers. I have been meeting regularly with the Governing Board and Senior Leadership Teams to discuss plans and strategies for the next phase and we will of course keep you informed of any updates should guidance from the Government regarding school closures change this weekend, which I feel many are anticipating. Please be assured that any decisions will be made with the best interests of all taken into consideration. Our duties when we return to school will be not only to educate our children but also to ensure their safety and that of our staff. I know that you will share this sentiment with me.

We are very grateful to parents who completed the online survey which brought out some interesting points for us to consider. Since the start of the term, we have increased our live meetings, teaching and interaction for all age groups. For children in the Early Years, they will be continuing with their live pastoral Meets and storytelling with their teachers. In Years 1 and 2, they will have live pastoral Meets as well as live group discussions for English and Maths so that Form Teachers can continue to talk to children about their work and maintain a high level of pastoral support. In Years 3 and 4, on top of the live afternoon Form Time, there will be live registrations on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday (Assemblies on Monday and Wednesday) and the Subject Teachers will be available during timetabled Maths, English and Science lessons for live Meets to support any pre-recorded videos and to help deal with questions that the children will have. If your child is accessing lessons at times different from those published on the timetable, please be aware that staff may not be able to answer their queries on the streams or within the private comments options immediately. Years 5 and 6 will continue with live registrations and live teaching in core and other subjects. We appreciate that there will be demands on home networks and computers and that not every system will benefit every child but we continue to try and recognise the different ages of the children and the abilities and needs that each will have. Thank you for all your

support so far, both with remote learning but also for the teachers who are trying their very hardest to deliver for the children.

We thought it would be worth sharing with you once again some useful lines of communication whilst we are all still working remotely. In Pre-Nursery please contact Miss Heath, in Nursery, please contact your child's Nursery Teacher and in Reception to Year 2, please contact, in the first instance, your child's Form Teacher. In Years 3 to 6, for any academic matters, please contact your child's Subject Teacher in the first instance and for any pastoral matters, your child's Form Teacher. Heads of Section will always be available to help, as will Victoria Evans (Deputy Head Academic) and Varun Footring (Deputy Head Pastoral). For any questions regarding technology, please call the school number 07906 848945 and speak to Karen Copson, who will be able to direct your query to either the correct member of staff, or log it on the school's technical helpdesk. That way we can ensure that your queries are being dealt with in a timely fashion. Of course, please do not hesitate to contact me for any of the above reasons, at any time (head@manorprep.org) and I will be only too willing to help.

One of the key messages at this time is recognising the need to spend time away from our computer screens, for children, parents and staff. Whilst it is not our intention to dictate to staff how to manage the different elements of their roles, we are trying to discourage them from long periods spent in front of their computer screens in the evenings. We therefore ask for your understanding if you do not always receive a response to email between 6:00pm and 8:00am or at weekends but they will of course always respond to you as soon as they can.

The theme of my assembly on Monday morning centred around VE Day, which of course we should all have been celebrating tomorrow in the memory of ordinary people who achieved extraordinary things. On 8th May 1945, 75 years ago, peace was restored after 6 years of war. Countless lives were lost and great hardship was endured by so many on both sides. As the world encounters a different kind of shared suffering at the hands of the global pandemic, I hope that you will all take a moment or two this weekend to remember all those who paid the final sacrifice all those years ago.

Well done to all the children for all that they are achieving and the way in which they are coping. I hope that by the time of my next communication, the way forward will be clearer but in the meantime I wish you all a very happy Bank Holiday weekend.

Yours

Alastair Thomas

Headmaster