

Update from the Headteacher

Dear Parents/Carer

I'm mindful of the significant volume of communications over the last two weeks so I will try to keep this relatively short.

I hope that the last full week of remote learning has gone well. I suspect that you are looking forward to your child's return as much as I'm looking forward to seeing the school full of children once more. While we have all faced our challenges during this period of lockdown, I would like to take the opportunity, in this final edition of the TBulletin, to thank and recognise all those involved in making this experience as positive as possible for our students.

In March 2020, when schools closed for the first time, we were designing remote provision from a 'standing start' - and we learnt a great deal in the process. The development of our remote provision to what it is now - engaging, challenging and as close to in-school learning as we could achieve - has been testament to the hard work and dedication of the staff. In addition, our support staff have ensured our school has continued to function effectively, children (including those on site) have been well supported, and the school has remained safe and is well prepared for full return.

The Governors have continued to provide excellent support and counsel during what has seemed, at times, a more challenging Lockdown period. Furthermore, the support, encouragement and gratitude from parents has been very much appreciated. We are very grateful for the hard work you have put into assisting with remote learning - many of you whilst working from home too!

My final thanks go to our students. They have done more and achieved better than many ever thought possible. There is so much that they have had to cope with and their resilience and optimism will stand them in good stead as we move forward.

Finally, it seems slightly unusual that we are discussing new starts as we are not that far from the end of term. There is much in this short term for us to do - and hopefully these next three weeks will provide a useful transition period for students as they get used to being back in school permanently. This wider reopening of schools is a key milestone on the government's 'road map.' I am sure we are all hoping there will be no 'diversions.'

James Shapland

Upcoming Dates

- Thursday 18 March: Y7 PTC

Letters this week

- [Return to school letter](#)
- Timings for students [taking part in LFT](#) / [not taking part](#)

Timetables

Please ensure your child checks their timetable for their first day back (some will change on Sunday). Parents can access these [via Insight](#).

Asymptomatic testing for parents and adults in households with children at school

Parents and other adults in households with children at school or college, who do not have symptoms, can now access regular, rapid coronavirus testing. This includes childcare and support bubbles. Tests are fast, easy and completely free. There are [different ways](#) for a household, childcare or support bubble to collect their test to take at home, twice-weekly:

- through your employer, if they offer testing to employees
- by collecting a home test kit from a local test site – anyone aged 18 or over can collect 2 packs of 7 tests
- by ordering a home test kit online – please do not order online if you can access testing through other routes, this frees up home delivery for those who need it most

Year 9 Parent-Teacher Consultation Evening and Options

Thank you to everyone for last night's Y9 Parent-Teacher Consultation Evening. Below is feedback from a parent which reflects many of those we have received today. Please don't forget to submit your child's GCSE Options Form today.

'A quick email to say what a wonderful experience Parents Consultation Evening was this evening! We were very pleased to hear of [our child's] progress but I wanted to express how wonderful the parents evening platform was for us. It ran smoothly, was easy to use, and what a pleasure to run to time and be able to do it from our home! We would be very happy to continue with this virtual parents evening platform in the future. I hope the return to school goes smoothly next week; [my child] is really looking forward to getting back.'

Student Wellbeing

Returning to School questionnaire

Please ensure that your child has completed the short 'returning to school' questionnaire in their Head of Year Google Classroom page. This will help us identify and support students who have concerns about, or are experiencing difficulties in, making the adjustment back to school

Kathy Weston

Please click [here for fantastic advice](#) from Dr Kathy Weston regarding your child's return to school, as well as a reminder of how to sign up for the exclusive *Tooled Up* resources.

SEND

Timetables and packing bags

Please remember that many SEND pupils struggle to organise themselves and they may need greater support in the first few weeks of the return to school. If you can go through their timetable each night and supervise their bag-packing this can help them have a smooth transition back to school.

Safeguarding

[Are you riding your e-scooter illegally?](#) Please click on the link. E-scooters are prohibited in school as well as on public roads.

Please remember that, although schooling returns next week, students should continue to follow **national lockdown restrictions** when moving to and from school.

'Ashlyns Futures' Careers Programme

Virtual work placements are a fantastic way to give students valuable experience in the workplace, the chance to develop new skills and the opportunity to enhance their application for the next stage of their educational journey. Now is a great time to start thinking about and planning work experience during Easter and Summer holidays. This useful [parents guide](#) provides links to organisations which are currently offering virtual work placements.

Students in Years 10 – 12 can apply for free virtual work experience with *Veterinary Mentor*, where they will follow the patient's journey from diagnosis

ParentPay - Top-Ups

Please remember to activate your new ParentPay account so that you can top up your child's dinner money before they return to school, using the activation letter emailed to you on 18 February. You will now have the facility to set up regular low balance reminders if you wish. You will no longer be able to top up via your WisePay account.

Dining Room

Don't forget your contactless payment cards!



The dining room will be open as usual for break and lunch, with breakfast returning from Thursday. Look out for theme lunches and Meal Deals. Menus are available on the website and displayed around school. Accent are committed to a Covid safe service.

Year 11 Session 6

This will resume in the LRC Monday-Thursday 3.20-4.20 from 15 March. We look forward to welcoming Year 11 back to this very productive session.

House Points

[Current house points](#)

Bourne	Coram	Handel	Raven
23218	23796	23003	23213
2 nd	1 st	4 th	3 rd

05/03/2021

to treatment and follow up. It runs for six-months, offering 30 hours of valuable experience, and takes place every third Sunday of the month starting on 21 March. Places are limited and are subject to an application process. Find out more and apply ASAP [here](#).

Students in Years 10 – 13 (age 14-18) can sign up for virtual work experience organised by the *Science and Technology Facilities Council* between June and August. The programme is also suitable for students with a non-STEM focus such as communications or art. Find more details and apply before the 15 March deadline [here](#).

The *InvestIn* Summer Internship programme offers work experience access to a variety of different sectors including architecture, computer science, dentistry, engineering, film making, banking, law, medicine, politics and psychology. More details can be found [here](#).

World Book Day

Our celebrations for World Book Day this week included a student book quiz and a session by the poet, Hip Hop artist and author, Karl Nova. Karl is the winner of CLIPPA 2018 for *Rhythm and Poetry*, his first published collection. Born and raised in London as well as Lagos, Karl is a social commentator, creative writing workshop facilitator, broadcaster and cultural critic. Students had the opportunity to listen to Karl talk about his work and his creative process.

Bedrock

This has been another great week for all years on *Bedrock*, with an outstanding amount of points achieved and lessons completed! Well done to the following classes for their achievements:

Year 7 gained 5,945 points over the past week, with a total of 545 lessons! The average attainment of students across the year was 30%.

Year 8 gained 8,375 points over the past week, with a total of 568 lessons! The average attainment of students across the year was 30%.

9y/En1 were the top performing class overall in KS3 and scored 5,961 points. The average points per student in this class was 199.



Please see the flyer for a [free workshop](#) on Resilience and Wellbeing for families on 17 March, as well as details of "[drop in](#)" surgery with the Family Support Worker

Music Tuition

If your child is interested in taking music lessons, Hertfordshire Music Service offer tuition in a range of different instruments. For further information please go to; <http://www.hertsmusicservice.org.uk/music-lessons/>

If you wish to withdraw or change music lessons for September 2021, please email SchoolsDirectInvoicing@hertfordshire.gov.uk by Monday 17 May. All other queries regarding music tuition, please email musictuition@ashlyns.herts.sch.uk.

New school shoes?

There are many retailers offering online assistance and measuring guides: click [here](#) for a summary of local and online shoe retailers, together with a reminder of which shoes are appropriate for school.

ASA News

Floral kits for Mothering Sunday and Easter: £30 each
Appleblossom Flowers (an ex Ashlyns student) has created some fabulous floral kits to help celebrate Mothers' Day and Easter, helping to raise money for the ASA. Everything you need to create some beautiful arrangements.

Mothers' Day - [click here](#) to order by today (5 March) with collection Friday 12th March
Easter kits - [click here for basket kit](#), [click here for wreath kit](#) - order by Friday 12th March

Thank you for your support with Bag2School and Dacorum Decorating which raised £800!