

# QUEEN ELIZABETH'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The Green Road, Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 1EP

Tel: 01335 343 685 Email: enquiries@qegs.email Twitter: @qegs\_ashbourne

Web: www.queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mr S Garrity Chair of Governors: Mrs H Baker



20<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

## Coronavirus Bulletin – 20/5/20

I hope that you are all safe and well, coping with our 'new normal' and following the Government's advice in staying alert, staying safe and reducing the risk of the virus spreading wherever you can.

Covid-19 and 'Lockdown' have posed many challenges for us all, including me! However, I have been in regular contact with our QEGSMAT team and all of the Secondary Derbyshire Headteachers. Discussing plans, sharing ideas, supporting each other, learning from each other and ensuring we all do the best we can for all of our students and staff. I must acknowledge Phil Smith (Headteacher at City of Derby Academy), Craig Yates (Headteacher at Buxton Community School), Malcolm Kelly (Headteacher at Anthony Gell High School) and Andrew Marsh (Headteacher at Highfields School). I have very strong relationships with each of these leaders and their schools. We have met regularly (virtually of course) and they have each been a great source of support to me personally. Sometimes great things come from difficult times and I am sure these school and professional relationships will endure for a long time to come.

Once again, there has been lots going on both in and out of school:

- I am pleased to announce that we have appointed **Mrs Louise Allen as our new Assistant Headteacher (Head of Sixth Form)** from September 1st 2020. I know she will do a fantastic job and will be a great addition to my leadership team.
- Well done to **George M in Year 13 for curating an online Art Exhibition** with submissions from students at QEGS and beyond. A fantastic project with brilliant involvement from staff and students. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CAQhCLunmeq/>. Thank you George.
- How about this! [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4m\\_9sw\\_FDp4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4m_9sw_FDp4). **Phenomenal footage of the moon recorded by one of the A Level Physics students** in the schools observatory. He recommends you watch this in the dark with headphones on whilst sitting back!
- The school received its **4 SSAT Certificates this week for exceptional post-16 performance in 2019**, apologies if this is the second time this has been celebrated and/or mentioned – I am very proud!
- A reminder about the '**Virtual Transition**' **webpage for all Year 6** and possible younger students who are planning on coming to QEGS in the future. <https://www.queenelizabeths.derbyshire.sch.uk/joining-qegs/joining-qegs-transition/>. Following recent Government advice, school is unable to have any Year 6 students on site this term so there will be as much as possible added to the website and when Year 6 return to their schools locally, school will also try to offer some virtual interaction. Also, some Year 6 Transition work has also been added onto the school website.
- Ready for June 22<sup>nd</sup> which would have been the scheduled **Year 11 Sixth Form Transition Week**, there will be some Year 11 Transition lessons for students to engage with, to help prepare for Sixth Form.
- In addition, normal **Transition days will be planned for September, so that all Year 6, Year 10 and Year 12** students have a few days without the other year groups to get used to their new school (for some), or a new course, new teachers, new ways of learning and making lots of new friends.
- **Welcome back Mrs Meadows in Student Services** who returns to school from her maternity leave.
- Finally. Never has there been a more appropriate time to **celebrate and acknowledge your fantastic teachers by sending a FREE thank you card** for National Thank a Teacher Day <https://thankateacher.co.uk/thank-a-teacher/thank-a-teacher-form/>. It would make their day!

**Update on plans to re-open for Year 10 and 12 students:**

- Following Government guidance, plans are being drafted for the potential return to school of Year 10 and 12 students sometime after May half-term.
- The priority is always to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all of the students, families and staff. School will only re-open to students if it is absolutely safe to do so, whilst maintaining provision for children of Key Workers and the most vulnerable.
- For Year 10, and 12 any phased re-opening will be gradual, safe and a partial return to allow for some pastoral meetings in the first instance and then some face to face teaching, initially in the core subjects. Any teaching that takes place in school will be supported by work that students should be completing at home. Students will not be in their usual teaching groups. This is in order to reduce movement around the school site, limit contact with others and to support social distancing. A reduced school day will also be in operation. The Government has set a review date of the 28<sup>th</sup> May when it will decide if any of our plans can go ahead.
- Parents of Year 10 and 12 students will receive a separate letter on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020 outlining the plans and timeline in more detail.
- In addition, details will soon be sent out for the virtual 'Countdown to Success' event for Year 10 which would normally take place after half-term. This will give parents and students access to subject advice, exam and revision tips and also the opportunity to order significantly discounted revision guides direct from the publishers and exam boards. Information will be sent out in mid-June.

**Update on remote learning plans for Year 9:**

A further update on remote learning will be sent out very soon. One change that will be made after half term, is for Year 9 students' remote learning work to move to their option courses for GCSE/BTEC in Year 10. It is felt that the best use of Year 9 time should now be spent on the courses they will be following next year and to start early with such a disrupted year to date. Further details on this change and timeframe to follow.

Please remember staff are here to help and support. They are very keen to stay in touch as best as they can, appreciating that some students will require more and some require less support. You should by now have received a phone-call from your child's Form Tutor, if you haven't please contact the Form Tutor direct or refer to your child's Progress Leader and this will be chased up for you. School is concerned that Years 7, 8, 9 may not be physically in school for some time and is looking at different ways of maintaining a sense of school community, whilst ensuring high quality educational provision. Staff are here to help, so please get in touch if you have any concerns.

**Year 11 and 13 next steps:**

Should students in Years 11 and 13 need support with careers/next steps, they can contact Ms Morgan or Mrs Bains who will help advise, guide and inform them about all available options and pathways.

Finally, I wanted to let you know how proud I have been of our students during this period of closure. Whether they are among the small number who have been in school or, like most, they have been at home, I know that they have been a credit to themselves. A number of you have been kind enough to tell me how they are getting on, what activities they have participated in and what learning they have been doing, and of course I get updates from staff.

Whilst lockdown and remote learning might be challenging for us all, please take care, stay safe, encourage your child to get some fresh air and be active (in a safe manner of course), enjoying this good period of weather.

Yours faithfully



Scott Garrity  
**Headteacher**