



DARRICK WOOD SCHOOL

RESPECT | RESPONSIBILITY | HONESTY

Dear Parent/Carer

These are unprecedented times and I write this email to welcome everyone back to the summer term, which starts on Monday, knowing that the lockdown continues and schools remain closed, subject to further government announcements.

Thank you for your feedback on the situation with setting work for pupils and also your overwhelming support for what we have tried to do. Similarly to when we survey parents about homework, we have contrasting opinions on the setting of work during lockdown. For some, the work we have set it is too little and for others too much. Some parents like that we make it available on Bromcom, others find that is not helpful at all. We will continue to do what we can and adapt things as we move into the new term. For now, we plan to continue making work available to Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 via Bromcom. We will guide our teachers to set consolidation type work as opposed to new topics at this stage. Where there is something useful that Years 11 and 13 can do, we will also send them information on this.

There is some opinion that the amount of work set can look very daunting when it is viewed all at once. This is not helped by the fact that Bromcom removes items of work three days after the deadline has passed and so we have advised our teachers to set longer deadlines and therefore the work can stay there longer. Furthermore, the amount of work that pupils complete in any normal week is, when you think about it, quite large even without taking homework into consideration. For most year groups there are 25 separate lessons each week. We suggest that your children work through each piece that they can, that they do not worry if they cannot do something and just do their best. We plan to email parents/carers of pupils on the SEN register next week to reassure on this matter further, but the overall message to log-on and complete what you can.

You will be aware that there is now a set process to be followed for grades to be awarded to Years 11 and 13 in the absence of examinations. We are looking at the finer details of the guidance and holding virtual meetings with subject leaders to ensure we follow the guidance in the manner expected. We understand why parents or pupils may want to contact the School in relation to this, but please do not do so as we are not in a position to discuss these matters in any way as we are guided by a strict protocol.

We have remained open over the Easter holidays for the children of parents/carers who are deemed key workers by the Government. This remains the case next week and for the future. There is no requirement for such children to attend every day but please email keyworker@darrickwood.bromley.sch.uk if you feel as a key worker your child may need to attend on any given weekday.

I intend to send pupils a link to an assembly as often as I can over the coming weeks. I think some means of reminding us we are all one community in the current circumstances is important.

Wednesday, 22nd April is Earth Day (<https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2020/>). The World Class Schools organisation (<https://www.worldclass-schools.org/>) of which we are a member is encouraging pupils and staff of all member schools to do something creative on this day. This was planned before the coronavirus crisis took hold, but perhaps becomes even more poignant in the current circumstances. I will explain more to pupils in my assembly, but the idea is that on Wednesday next week, instead of completing work for their normal lessons that day, they each do something more creative, respecting the social distancing rules of course. It might relate to environmental matters and Earth Day itself, or something else, we do not mind. The important thing is that we all make the most of the day and #BeCreative.

Finally for this evening, a former pupil of Darrick Wood, Sydney Cassidy, has contacted me asking for help from her former school. She is studying for a BA in Fashion but has decided to use her skills to create scrubs for frontliners working in the NHS. If you have anything that will help her, please contact her as per the attached.

I wish you and your families a healthy and enjoyable weekend in the current circumstances and look forward to hearing how different members of our school community contribute to Earth Day 2020 on Wednesday. More details to follow.

Yours sincerely

Dr M J Airey