



# THE BUCKINGHAM SCHOOL

## A SPECIALIST SPORTS COLLEGE

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Headteacher: Mr A McGinnes

23 March 2020

Dear Year 8,

I wanted to update you as best I can with the daily changes that are occurring in the education system that inevitably are having a direct impact on you.

I am extremely proud of the way you are responding and adapting to the change, as evidenced by the countless emails I have already received from Year 8 parents and students alike. When you joined, The Buckingham School just over a year ago, we made a commitment to each other to ensure you can gain the knowledge and skills you need to prepare you for whatever next steps come your way following GCSEs. Whilst I appreciate that GCSEs must still seem a long way off to you, it is the steps we endeavour to take now, throughout this period of change, that will help pave the way for us in years to come. Please know that as a School, we are committed more than ever to helping support you throughout this time, in whatever ways we can.

Over the coming weeks, you will need to continue working closely with your teachers; keeping in touch with your form tutors and peers, checking Google Classroom regularly where possible and completing as much work assigned as you can; be that online or paper copies of it. It is by you completing this work that we will be better able to fill in the gaps in your learning more fully when we all return to normal lessons. While it may seem overwhelming at present to try to keep up with everything, please be patient with us as this is new territory for teachers as well as all of you. There are instances where we are still striving to get the quantity and pitch correct for each group but I am sure that this will come with time. We just ask that you do your best to complete what work you can in the time frames of our lessons so that we can continue to work on improving our own delivery system to you.

You will be expected to have contact with your form tutor each week so we can review how things are going for you and we will be using your feedback to further improve aspects of remote working for you. This is new territory for us all and we will be using your feedback to develop our best practice.

It is important to remember this is a national situation, affecting thousands of students across the country and the Government has stressed that students will not be disadvantaged. More guidance will come out over the coming days and weeks. We will communicate with you regularly. Keep to your routines and follow your online timetable as if you were in school as best you can. I appreciate that this may be difficult to achieve, but please do your best to work with us and keep to as great a sense of normalcy as possible under the circumstances.

If you are in receipt of Pupil Premium Funding, please email Mrs Bones regarding any queries you have.

The Student First team will remain as ever, supportive of your wellbeing needs. If you have any concerns or issues that arise you can contact your form tutor, Mr Lagdon (Assistant Head of Year) or Miss Spekkens (Head of Year). If you receive support from the Student First team this will continue remotely and you will have been contacted about how this will work to support your needs. If you have been absent and have not spoken to staff you would usually check in with, please make contact with them.

*The Buckingham School is concerned that every student should have the opportunity to attend school activities/obtain equipment, regardless of their financial circumstances. As such, it may be possible to subsidise those students who would otherwise be unable to attend trips/purchase items. Please feel free to write in confidence to Mrs K Bones at [kbones@buckinghamschool.org](mailto:kbones@buckinghamschool.org), if you wish to seek assistance, or obtain more information about Pupil Premium funding.*



There are some practical things you can do to ease worries or concerns you may have about the Coronavirus. Social media can portray a skewed and ill-informed version of the situation. Go to sources you know are trustworthy and ignore misinformation, rumours or fake news.

Look after your mental health. With all of the misinformation and panic that can be experienced, it's important to look after yourself. If you feel you are becoming overwhelmed or worrying about what is going on, talk to a member of your family or a friend. Talking about things WILL make it better.

Groups that can offer you some support should you need it.

- [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com) - Free, safe and anonymous online counselling and support
- The Samaritans - Phone 116 123
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799> - Good advice from the BBC

Continue to be kind and look after people who may need your help. Make time listening and talking to people who you think might be feeling low. There may be people within your wider community that you can help and support.

As always if you have any queries or issues, please do not hesitate to contact myself, Mr Lagdon or your form tutor. We will complete the next stretch of time together, following Government advice each step of the way and I look forward to working through this with you all.

With my very best wishes,

**Miss E Spekkens**

Head of Year 8

[espekkens@buckinghamschool.org](mailto:espekkens@buckinghamschool.org)

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