

Lucton News

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EQUESTRIAN

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Issue 15



From the Heads



With a sense of déjà vu, we have once again been required by the government to close the school to most of our students.

We do fully appreciate the importance of lockdown, and absolutely support the government's intention of preventing the spread of the virus through unnecessary social contact, especially given the existence of this new more transmissible variant. This does not mean, however, that our hearts are not heavy at having to comply with the restrictions that have been imposed on us. Like everyone else, our fondest wish is that a successful roll-out of the vaccination will make a return to normal life possible in the

near future.

We contacted all parents at the start of term to inform that that we would be open to the children of critical workers, and we are proud to stand by this; however, in the light of all that has been said about the virus and the threat to both the NHS and care services, and to the wider population, we do have to remind parents respectfully of the specific guidance issued by the government on 5th January, which says; "Children [of critical workers] can go to school or college if required." The clear implication of both "can" (it does not say "should"!) and "if required" is that students who are able to stay at home really ought to do so.

Naturally, we will do all we can to support the students in their learning at this difficult time. We are committed to teaching the full timetable for each year group, so far as it is possible to do so. Swimming remotely is a bit difficult to manage! Despite technical glitches, we are up and running with remote learning and have already had a number of comments from parents and students commenting positively on our delivery. We thank everyone involved for getting on with this difficult task at a moment's notice. We are also grateful to those who have taken the time to send their supportive comments, but remind parents and students that all staff are working and are on hand to deal with issues or problems. While there will be limits to what we can practically do in some circumstances, we do aim to respond promptly to any problem or suggestion for improvement that is notified to us.

You are no doubt now aware that the summer's public exams have been cancelled. They will be replaced by teacher assessments, although what is to be assessed, how and by when has not been explained to schools, yet. Given the uncertainty, we shall be teaching and learning as

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normal in Years 11 and 13; getting on with the next topic, learning new skills and recapitulating material that has been covered so far, in order to ensure the students are fully prepared for whatever assessments are required. It does seem sensible, however, to put Year 11 and Year 13 mocks on hold until we are clear whether they will be useful in the assessment process, so we envisage that they will be delayed until further notice.

With staff and students on site, safety is naturally our highest priority. To this end, we have whole-heartedly embraced community testing for all staff and for students in Years 7 and above. No-one can say that the procedure is a pleasant one, but the atmosphere in the testing station in the Upper Hall has been lovely; with lots of humour and a great deal of caring support. Best of all, every test so far has been a resounding negative for COVID. A huge vote of thanks goes to all involved, especially Mr Brown who has organised everything so well. We are not complacent, however, and both community testing and, of course, our existing protocols, which proved effective in keeping everyone in school throughout the whole of the Autumn Term, will remain in place for the foreseeable future. With members of the school community sadly having lost loved ones to the virus in the last few weeks, none of us should need reminding of the importance

of "hands, face and space" and all that goes along with this message.

Happy learning and stay safe!

Elmien Niblett & John Goode

Lucton School Lateral Flow Testing Station

Normally when I start to type these articles it is either to do with CCF or DofE activities with pictures of lovely views of children firing weapons, or crawling in the woods; however, this New Year I will break with tradition.

Tuesday and Wednesday saw us receive a couple of thousand Lateral Flow Testing kits and many boxes of PPE. This was all arranged pre-lockdown, in order to test all school members, both students and staff; however, in we were, after our first INSET day for staff, to stay at home, adults and children alike, with the exception of critical workers and their children (and of course, school staff). To that end, Tuesday and Wednesday saw a team of Lucton staff undertake a series of online tutorials so that the school can deliver the testing cycle for those students and staff who were on site. After the training, a dress rehearsal was conducted to ensure all testing personnel were competent with their roles and then we were off - Wednesday mainly testing staff before rolling

this out to the students on Thursday.

Although, not the most pleasant of experiences (swabbing your own throat and nose) it was managed by all and thankfully all those tested have been negative - in excess of 100 students and staff combined. We are reminded that we should not be complacent, though, and weekly testing will now be carried out, in line with NHS guidelines.

I personally would like to thank the staff that were "voluntold" they were part of the testing team, for their efforts in completing the training and practice runs, but most of all for the efficiency in which the tests were carried out. Everything from registering the test subjects, through to testing and processing the results - thank you.

**Rich Brown, Operations
Manager, Lucton School**



*Thank you, Mr Brown, for the professional way in which you have organised and lead the LFT operation, so successfully!
JG & EN

Prep School



HAPPY NEW YEAR! Well, that was a slightly different start to the term than we had envisaged. It just goes to show that "The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men Gang aft agley," or so said Robbie Burns. And he was right.

Before I discuss the week, we welcome Mrs Leonard to Lucton. Mrs Leonard will be looking after Year 5 whilst Mrs Wall is on maternity leave. Joining a school midway through a year is always interesting; however, joining a school in a lockdown and teaching on TEAMS is really interesting. But with a smile, Mrs Leonard has really engaged with the task and with the children. In the meantime, we wish Mrs Wall well and are

looking forward to discovering whether it is a boy or a girl – we do have a sweepstake in school!

Well, we have kicked off the term, well and truly. Reception Class have a wonderful topic of 'Castles', and who wouldn't enjoy being a knight storming a castle? Year 1 have covered their class (and homes) with post-it notes, labelling all the materials that objects are made of. Year 2 (pictured above) have embraced our weather at the moment; they are starting to write poems on 'Winter' and have been exploring the woods for wintry signs during their walk. All this in addition to beginning the stories of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole!

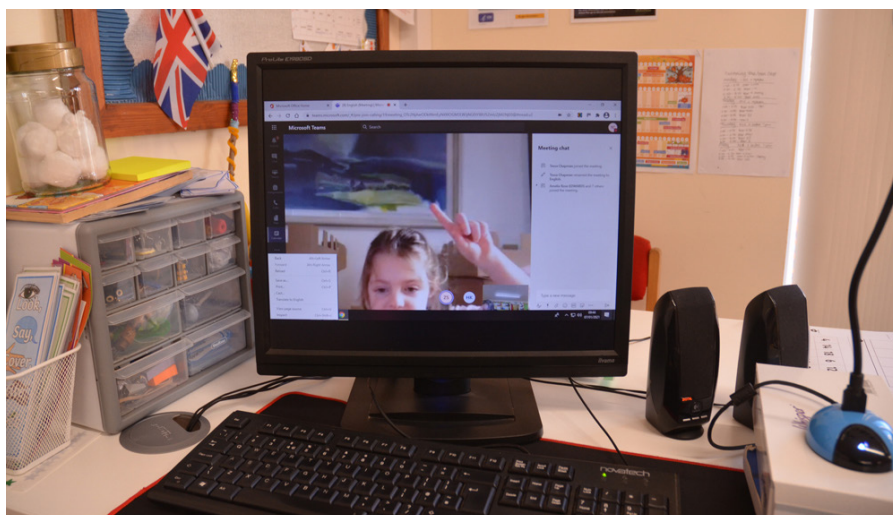
Year 3 have made their Cave Paintings 3D (I will have to work that out) and have been investigating what can be done with words: how many words can I make from my name?; how many words can I make from 'Swimming Pool?', and so on. Year 4 have embarked on the massive topic of the Romans. Did you know that the last, official, Roman Emperor died in 1453? Now that was an eye-opener. Admittedly, this was Rome of the East, i.e. Constantinople but still. Year 5 have delved further into the mysteries of materials. What exactly is a property when we talk about materials?

A great start to the term and well done to all the team and

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families for adjusting at the 11th hour. Uncharted territory is quickly becoming mapped. Well done for those at home, getting online and engaging with the lessons and here's hoping and praying that this lockdown will end before February half term.

Mr Bicker-Caarten, Head of Prep School



Middle School

Here are some pictures of the fantastic cakes that my Year 8W Chemistry class made last term.

They were studying the Earth and so had to make a cake, or cakes, that embraced that theme. Well done to all, there were really creative and delicious entries!

Ms Berry, Middle School



Sixth Form

As a Sixth Form we are all now plugged in, powered up, and Teamed together online, and are making the most of the current situation.

At times I do feel as though I'm in mission control at NASA, flitting between screens and programs whilst juggling several emails and requests! Still, it has been pleasing to see how positive and engaged our Sixth Formers have been, and any technical hurdles are being met head-on as we fully acquaint ourselves with a new way of learning.

Whilst the physical distance throws up challenges, we are endeavouring to find ways to get things done; I know the Sixth Form Magazine Team

have already formulated a few plans, including a page with work-from-home selfies! On the subject of the magazine, thank you to all those parents who wrote in to congratulate the team on their work - it was lovely to see how well received it was. I'm sure it is only the start of things to come.

In other news, congratulations to Keira S in Y13 who passed her driving exam in December; I'm sure, like the rest of us, she is itching to get out and about once it is deemed safe.

We also have a number of students involved in UCAS applications and interviews to other further learning institutions, and already a number have been offered

places dependent on certain grades, which is really pleasing. Some have even been preparing for online interviews, which is not easy, and I am grateful to the wonderful Sixth Form staff here at Lucton for helping our students through the process.

That's all from me this week. No doubt some of you may have to put up with my voice coming through the home speakers, though what's not to enjoy about a good bit of History?! I look forward to continuing to welcome the Sixth Formers at 9am for Form, bright eyed and bushy-tailed no doubt!

Mr Wolstenholme, Head of Sixth Form

Remote Learning

Thank you to parents in the Senior School for supporting the remote learning packages so that our students can make progress. However, as we continue there are a few reminders I would like to bring to everyone's attention.

1: Please remember your child must register with the form tutor at 9am every day. Please let us know if they are ill and unable to attend.

2: Please make sure, as we

have indicated before, that students need to be ready to learn at the start of each day and that appropriate behaviour is expected. The learning really should take place in a communal area, and especially not a bedroom if at all possible. We have had an unfortunate incident where a student started to change their clothes whilst online! Fortunately, this was managed without a problem, but we would not want students or staff to be placed in such an

embarrassing situation again. Remember also that lessons are recorded.

3: If a student fails to attend a lesson, or part thereof, you will be informed by the member of staff.

As I am sure you appreciate, these protocols are in place to ensure that students' learning continues smoothly and effectively.

There are lots of sources of information for parents to

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help students stay safe online and get the best from remote learning. Here are the links to some of the best:

[Home-schooling: How to help your child's online learning - BBC News](#)

[Information, Advice and Support to Keep Children Safe Online \(internetmatters.org\)](#)

[COVID-19: guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Keeping children safe | NSPCC](#)

[Free internet safety resources for parents | Safer Internet Centre](#)

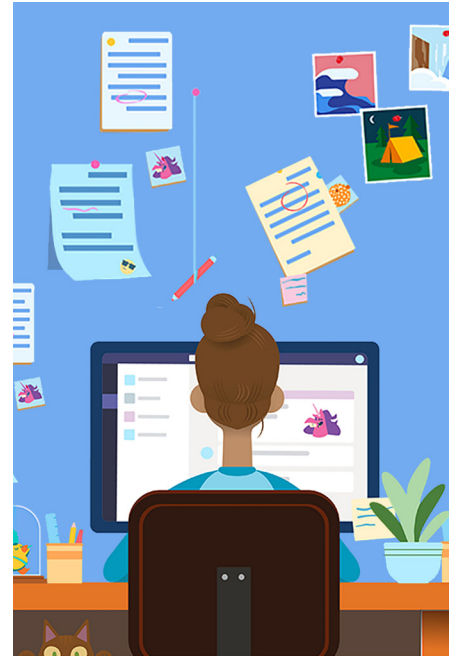
[Parents Helpline - YoungMinds](#)

[Home | Parent Zone](#)

[Managing children's tech time during Covid](#)

[Thinkuknow](#)

Mrs Goode, Head of Senior School



Equestrian

Jake's Blog

We have been busy over Christmas. Some of us have had some time off and changed over to have a rest but we have also taught some students.

We have held two Pony Club rallies, both with a waiting list. The event just before Christmas featured pupils in fancy dress, and they took part in lots of fun games and a quiz, although the weather wasn't particularly Christmassy as it poured with rain!

The Radnor Pony Club also held a rally, again in fancy dress, but which also included a message of support for Holly Doyle, a former Radnor Pony

Club member who came 3rd in Sports Personality of the Year!

Well done, Holly, on this huge achievement. Miss Coates remembers Holly well in her early years on her black pony! We look forward to seeing you all back soon but will look

after critical worker children for now. Please stay safe, and all those with your own ponies keep to safe riding so that you reduce the risk of falling off and needing an ambulance.

Jake

