

PURCELL PARENT NEWSLETTER

6th November 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The only thing which seems certain at the moment is that we are surrounded by uncertainty! Given the current machinations in the USA (which may have changed again by the time you read this), the constantly changing Coronavirus situation, raised threat levels within the UK, job insecurities and economic volatility, it would be astonishing if we were not affected by all this turbulence. Certainly, it feels as if someone, somewhere has pushed “pause” on normal life. But we are at least still open, the music is still playing, students are still enjoying their classes and being together. Many schools are not so lucky, so we must be grateful we have got this far with relatively little disruption.

Lockdown

As you will be aware, we have now entered the national lockdown announced by the Prime Minister last weekend. I was relieved that schools were enabled to stay open during this period as I passionately believe that young people need to be in school and the benefits outweigh the risks. I hope it goes without saying that we must be even more conscientious about following our own COVID measures and we all have a responsibility to ensure our young people

do. We have had a number of students out this week – mostly in precautionary isolation – and, so far, none have tested positive. We regularly review our COVID Risk Assessments and associated guidance to ensure compliance with the most recent advice and the “lived” experience of day-to-day operations. Our measures were always conceived to mitigate the highest level of risk and, whilst no mitigations can be ever be entirely flawless, they remain

robust and continue to serve us well. It is interesting to see that many of our measures have now found their way into the official guidance for schools and we have not had to make any significant adjustments in light of the most recent updates in official guidance. I continue to ask for your support in encouraging and ensuring our young people adhere to the guidance at all times.



Virtual Parents Meetings

Good luck to all families who will be attending our first ever virtual parents meeting later today. We have tested the platform with a number of people and it has worked well. I hope there won't be

any technical issues but please be patient if any gremlins do arise and remember that staff are always happy to respond to queries from parents at any time. Do please let Chris Rayfield, Deputy Principal,

have any feedback from these evenings.



Virtual Open Morning/Purcell Online

And on the subject of virtual events, we are hosting a virtual Open Morning on Sunday 15th November from 10.00am. Interested parties can register via the School website and if you know of anyone who might be interested in the school, do please encourage them to attend.

I would also encourage you to keep a close eye on our online

“concert platform”, Purcell Online, which can be found on our YouTube channel [here](#). There is an incredible amount of amazing performance and composition work here and we will be uploading a number of full concerts throughout this coming half term. As we are unable to welcome you to concerts in person, this is the next best thing and the quality, range and diversity of content

is remarkable. Subscribing is the best way to ensure you don't miss anything.



Coronavirus and Young People

As we move into the next phase of the coronavirus crisis, I thought it might be helpful to point you towards a new scheme, launched by Barnardos and funded by the DfE, to help young people affected by the coronavirus crisis. The **See, Hear, Respond Partnership** will quickly identify and support children, young people and families who are struggling to cope with the impacts of coronavirus. Its aim is to provide early intervention before these children reach the threshold for statutory intervention.

See, Hear, Respond does not replace our usual school support processes but it may be useful for families to be aware of this additional support; our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Ziggi Szafranski, is always available to support you and address any concerns.

Barnardos say they “especially want to invite referrals for families who are most isolated from support due to COVID-19”, including:

- Under 5s with a specific focus on under 2s
- Those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and where there are concerns about their welfare e.g. online safety
- Children and young people experiencing anxiety, stress and other mental health difficulties
- Children who may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation inside or outside of the home
- Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic and Refugee children who experience

barriers to accessing services

- Young carers

Those who are referred will be offered help in one or more of four ways: an [online hub of support and information](#), online counselling and therapy, face-to-face support for those most affected and at risk of some of today’s most pertinent issues, such as criminal exploitation, and helping children and young people reintegrate back into school.

If you’d like to know more, you can find out more about the scheme [here](#).

With all good wishes,



Paul Bambrough
Principal

