

PURCELL PARENT NEWSLETTER

11th January 2022

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Happy new year to you all and welcome back to a new term! I hope that the majority of you were able to enjoy a restful Christmas period although I know, for some, it was blighted by Covid. The continuing issues Covid-19 poses will no doubt impact on some of our work in the coming term – not least the opportunity to invite parents into school for concerts and events. We will do all we can to continue to ensure our students benefit from outstanding musical, academic and social experiences, but there will be some inevitable compromises as we strive to keep everyone safe and manage the inevitable absence. One can only hope that we start to see an improvement in the situation soon although quite what this looks like, I'm not sure! However, here at school, we are surrounded by both young people and music – so we are looking forward optimistically!

New Staff

I am delighted to introduce to you four new members of staff who have joined us this term:

- **Victoria Samuel** joins us as our new Head of Art.
- **Michael Long** joins us as our new permanent Head of English.
- **Emma Bantock** joins us in the new senior role of

Director of Operations.

- **Carol Morgan** joins us as a residential nurse to work alongside Mrs Austin.

All bring huge amounts of experience and expertise to the school and we are thrilled to have them with us. I recognise there has been a period of instability in English but I hope that Mr Long's arrival will bring

continuity to the area. We very much hope that Mr Symmonds will return later in the term but we do not anticipate examination classes having any further changes of teacher between now and their exams.



Covid Testing

Parents of Day-Students are asked to ensure that they are undertaking at least two Covid tests each week. This will then replicate what we are doing with boarders and help ensure we keep the whole school community safe and therefore avoid any significant restrictions. The recent change in guidance now means that

a positive lateral flow test must result in immediate 7 day isolation period; it is no longer necessary to book a confirmatory PCR test. Where this occurs in school, we will isolate those concerned and contact parents and guardians to collect their child from school; close contacts of any positive case will then test

daily. Where possible, weekly boarders should take a Covid test prior to their return to school – it will be much less inconvenient for parents to identify any positive cases before travelling.

Parent Consultation Evenings

As you will understand, we will continue to manage Parent Consultations Evenings in their online format for the foreseeable future. Dates for the upcoming term are as follows:

- **Friday 28th January** - Year 11
- **Friday 4th February** - Year 12
- **Friday 4th March** - Year 10
- **Friday 18th March** - Year 9

Meet the Principal and Director Music Online Event

As you may remember from my last Newsletter of last term, Paul Hoskins and I will hold an informal, online meeting for any parents who wish to join us at **1800-1900 on Thursday 20th January**. There is no compulsion to attend at all: it is just an opportunity for us

to meet, give a brief update about where we are and hold an open discussion about any general areas you wish to raise. As I said previously, it won't be the right forum to deal with specific concerns or complaints (there are other ways to raise these), but I hope

parents will enjoy having the opportunity to "meet" in this informal manner. If you wish attend, please register via the link [here](#). You will be sent log on details nearer the time.

Mock Exams

Parents of Year 11 and 13 should be aware that students will be sitting mock exams in the week commencing 17th January. Students have been

advised that in the event of needing to revert to teacher assessed grades, some of these assessments may be relied upon. Assessments have

been tailored to focus on work covered and the fact they are happening should not be a surprise to any of them!

Life After Purcell: An Enrichment Programme For Year 13

During the course of this term, we will be running a series of talks for Year 13 students exploring issues they may face when they move on from here. Some will be run by our own

staff and some by external experts. They will be held on Fridays at 3.40pm –5.00pm. I hope that you will support us to provide these important and informative sessions by

enabling Day-Students and Weekly Boarders to attend by delaying their travel on these occasions. The sessions are as follows:

Friday 28th January	Drugs and Risk
Drugs of abuse, alcohol, smoking, risk and risk management; festivals and parties; emergencies; keeping yourself and friends safe. Presenter: Asha Fowells - The Daniel Spargo Mabbs Foundation www.dsmfoundation.org	
Friday 4th February	Life at Conservatoire or University
What to expect; from staff, from other students, from yourself. Freshers' Week, personal organisation, personal safety. Practicalities: money, food, travel, social life. Looking after yourself: stress, sleep, nutrition, relaxation.	
Friday 25th February	Health Matters
Registering with a GP/dentist; accessing services including contraception and sexual health services, using pharmacies and health centres. Self-care - when are you really ill? Help in an emergency, for self or others. Injuries and accidents.	
Friday 4th March	Mental Health and Wellbeing
Focusing on being a musician and performer, this presentation will look at what challenges and pressures affect mental health and what steps students can take to ensure mental wellbeing. Presenter: Dr Sara Acenso - Psychologist and Lecturer in Musicians' Health and Wellbeing, Royal Northern College of Music.	
Friday 18th March	Relationships and Sexual Health
Consent, healthy relationships, sexual health, gender and sexuality, pornography, the law. Presenter: Amy Forbes-Robertson www.ithappens.education	

I look forward to seeing you at some point in the coming term.

Best wishes,



Paul Bambrough, Principal

