

LGS Newsletter

22 May 2020



Dear Parents

Welcome to the 9th school closure period weekly newsletter.

This newsletter comes at the end of the first half of the summer term as we finish for a few days break over the half term week. I do hope that you are able to have some sort of meaningful break from routine and enjoy some family time.

I would especially like to wish 'Eid Mubarak' to those families celebrating the end of Ramadan this weekend. I am sure that marking this most communal of festivals in relative isolation from wider family and friends will be hard this year but I hope you will find positive ways to connect and celebrate within your households.



After half term we begin Phase 3 of the school closure period. As I write this we are awaiting further guidance on the possibility of a phased opening for Year 10 and 12 following another week of intense media speculation. Thank you to parents in Years 10 and 12 who completed our survey. The results showed - understandably, I think - a complete range of views. A number of you definitely *would* send your son or daughter to come in to school as part of a phased reopening; others of you said you definitely would *not*. Many of you were just not sure at this stage. We understand the concerns you have, and share many of these ourselves.

The next Government announcement on changes to the lockdown restrictions is due on 28th May. We will review the situation then and update you with our thinking as soon as possible. We have currently made tentative plans for students to be able to come into school in a structured way from the middle of June, but this is highly provisional and should not be taken as a firm indication until we know more from the Government. In the meantime we are carrying out a systematic risk assessment of the school buildings and our practices so that we are prepared for reopening whenever it takes place.

In the meantime we are focusing on the next phase of the students' education through remote/home learning. In response to increasing confidence in the way technology can be used, we are intending to introduce more interactive elements into the curriculum delivery to give more live connection between students and teachers. Our priorities are explained in more detail in this newsletter. Please read them carefully so you understand how we are intending to support your son/daughter after half term.

With my best wishes to you and your families.

Mr J Constable - Headteacher

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Home

Coronavirus (COVID-19): what you need to do

Stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others, even friends or family. You can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

NHS

Do not leave home if you or someone you live with has any of the following:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

[Check the NHS website if you have symptoms](#)

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Please visit our website at
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General updates

How to get in touch with us

Throughout the school closure period, please contact us via email.

The school@lgs.slough.sch.uk email address is monitored continually and your query will be forwarded to the most appropriate member of staff.

Reopening schools in June - what's happening?

What is the background?

The original Government intention was that

*Schools should prepare to begin to open for more children from 1 June. The Government expects children to be able to return to early years settings, and for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to be back in school in smaller sizes, from this point.....**Secondary schools and further education colleges should also prepare to begin some face to face contact with Year 10 and 12 pupils who have key exams next year, in support of their continued remote, home learning.*** However, this is conditional on infection rates continuing to decrease.

So the original guidance did not suggest Year 10 and 12 students would definitely return to school on 1st June, as has been widely misreported.

Teachers' unions, together with the headteachers' professional associations, have understandably asked questions about the basis of the reopening plans, which in some respects appear to contradict the social distancing requirements and other restrictions imposed elsewhere. Reassurance has been sought - and is now beginning to be given - about the scientific evidence underpinning the guidance.

Parental confidence is also highly variable. Most schools are reporting significant spreads of opinion about whether schools should reopen, from very positive to very negative. It is difficult to say whether parental opinion is for or against the move - but it is certainly true that there is a high level of anxiety and a number of concerns, primarily about how the risk of infection would be controlled.

What is the view in Slough?

The majority of Slough schools are working closely together on this. Slough Local Authority recently posted information for parents which essentially says that it supports schools' to make their own informed judgements about reopening in the light of the guidance and their own circumstances. The Local Authority has pointed out that because of the lack of clear guidance it was unlikely that many schools would be open on 1st June.

What is Langley Grammar school's position?

We have made very tentative plans which could allow for students in Year 10 and Year 12 to return to school in a phased way from mid-June onwards. However, this is subject to the completion of our own risk assessments, local developments and agreements and whatever Government guidance is provided after the half term break. We are proceeding with caution, conscious of parents' concerns.

Any phased return to school would be to support and supplement students' own home learning and our emphasis in the next few weeks is on providing the best remote education we can for students across all year groups.



Phase 3 plans

After half term we enter Phase 3 of our school closure. The emphasis here is on continuing to provide steady and sustainable learning but with an increasing emphasis on preparing students for a return to school, whatever form that may take.

What have we learnt from Phase 2?

We have seen steady improvements in our ability to....

- Set an appropriate volume of learning activities for students
- Think carefully about what we are trying to achieve when designing activities for home learning
- Introduce elements of interactivity into the curriculum delivery
- Track students' completion of learning activities
- Adapt our staff training provision to the current circumstances.

Thinking about our students, we have seen that.....

- The great majority are coping well with the workload
- There is no evidence yet of a tail-off in engagement or motivation
- They appreciate the feedback they get from their teachers
- A number of individuals do continue to struggle with organisation
- Technical issues are very real for many students – but many can be solved on a self-help basis with the right guidance.

We have also seen some very positive experimentation with interactive teaching and learning through Microsoft Teams across different subject teams.

So as a result we intend to.....

- Continue to follow the advice and guidance on the most effective home learning from organisations such as the Education Endowment Fund and other advisory bodies.
- Maintain the established way of setting learning activities, with compulsory 'You must do this....' activities which will be tracked for completion, and 'You could also do this....' activities for those with the time and interest to do more.
- Increase the level of interactivity in curriculum delivery, so students will have more opportunities to work directly with their teachers through video or chat in MS Teams.
- Introduce an element of structure into the frequency of interactive learning to support students' organization and increase consistency across subjects.
- Try to maintain motivation and engagement through interesting learning activities and effective pastoral support.



Phase 3 plans

Here are our priorities for each year group during Phase 3.

For all year groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for students to connect with teachers and form tutors • Ensure a real emphasis on trying to maintain student engagement and motivation so that students still enjoy what they are doing. • Provide opportunities for students to connect and collaborate with each other. • Support students' organisation and self management
Year 7 Year 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to deliver elements of the planned curriculum in line with subject schemes of work. • Provide an initial introduction to iPad use for Year 7. • Focus on essential core knowledge that students will need to learn and recall next year.
Year 9	<p>Students will focus on their GCSE programmes. They will not be set any more work in subjects they are not carrying through to Year 10.</p> <p>Compulsory GCSE subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver elements of the planned GCSE curriculum in line with the subject schemes of work. • Focus on the essential core knowledge that students will need to learn and recall to remain on track as far as is possible when they move into Year 10. <p>Optional GCSE subjects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the GCSE programme of study by delivering relevant elements of the planned GCSE curriculum.
Year 10	<p><i>In the absence of further DfE guidance on the implications for this cohort, the priority is to keep students on track in terms of developing their subject content knowledge.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set activities to help students consolidate and acquire knowledge – curriculum plans may need re-ordering to postpone aspects of skill development and practical work to Year 11. • Set some assessed work to judge how well students are learning the content and how to adapt the curriculum plan accordingly through the summer term and into Year 11. <p><i>Curriculum delivery will be primarily through online/remote learning with the possibility of some face-to-face support in school as the phase progresses.</i></p>
Year 11	<p>Students will work on the Year 11 to Year 12 transition programme developed by the Sixth Form team. This consists of three elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generic academic skill preparation for A Level study • Subject specific transition work Parts A and B • 'Future thinking' careers and higher education research
Year 12	<p><i>In the absence of further DfE guidance on the implications for this cohort, the priority is to keep students on track in terms of developing subject content knowledge as they move from year 1 to year 2 of the A Level programme.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set tasks that help students acquire knowledge – the curriculum plan may need to be re-ordered to postpone aspects of skill development and practical work to later in the course. • Set some assessed work to judge how well students are learning the content and how to adapt the curriculum plan accordingly through the rest of the summer term and into Year 13. • Work from Phase 3 will provide further evidence for UCAS predicted grades. • Students may have some form of internal examinations or formal assessment as soon as possible in Phase 4 – they will need further practice on examination material during Phase 3. <p><i>Curriculum delivery will be primarily through online/remote learning with the possibility of some face-to-face support in school as the phase progresses.</i></p>
Year 13	<p>No curriculum aims – the focus is on 'Next steps' support and advice in relation to higher education and other future options. The Sixth Form team may suggest optional activities to help students prepare for university.</p>



Phase 3 plans

So what is happening when?

Reading Week - 1st to 5th June

The first week after the half term break, beginning Monday 1st June, is designated as a Reading Week.

- During this week, students in Years 7 - 10 and 12 will **not** be set any new **compulsory** work in their subjects.
- Subject teams will set **non-compulsory extension and exploration activities** to encourage wider reading in relation to each subject. We will also set some additional activities for students to do which are no subject specific.
- Completion of these activities will not be tracked by teachers. Students can choose to follow their own interests.
- Some students will need to use some time in this week to catch up with unfinished work from Phase 2.
- We will be making contact with some of those students who have found it most difficult to organise themselves and keep on top of the workload to offer support.
- Students in Year 12 will also be starting some important activities in relation to application for higher education.
- Subject teams will be using the week to meet together to plan the curriculum for the remaining six weeks of the half term and prepare resources. We will also be running a range of staff developmental training activities during that week.
- We expect to maintain contact with students in this week through the form tutors and pastoral team.

Phase 3 curriculum begins on 8th June

- From Monday 8th June students will be set learning activities with a mix of compulsory and additional activities as has happened during Phase 2.
- Students in Year 9 will focus on the subjects they are taking for GCSE next year - English, Maths, the three sciences, and their four option choices.
- Depending on the year group, students will have access to a number of interactive learning opportunities with teachers. Examples of these interactive opportunities will include:
 - Recorded presentations with follow-up activities
 - Structured interactive session with teachers using MS Teams chat facility
 - Interactive teaching sessions using MS Teams video.
- Each subject is expected to deliver some of its curriculum content using interactive elements. These will be structured so that students know when they have to be available, and what to do if they are unable to take part in particular sessions for family or technical reasons.

More details will follow after half term.



Snapshots

What have students been doing this week?

From the Modern Languages team...

As we are unable to visit Germany this year as planned, some Year 8 German classes have been doing a "virtual German trip" this week with a quiz asking them to look at some of the places we would have visited to find out about them.

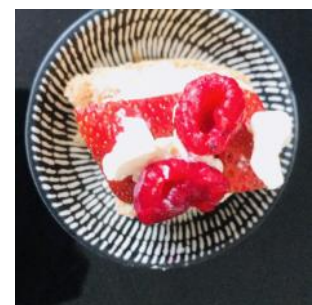
Mrs Roberts



From some of our form tutors

Students in 9R have shared some of the things they have done in their spare time - lots of art and cooking! The examples below are from Taniska Jain who has been busy in the kitchen and Jaskaran Sandhu and Rishita Rallabandi who have been busy with their own artwork. I have shared these examples with others in the form to inspire them!

Mr Gardner, 9R tutor



I would like to share this snippet from Amritesh Panda in my form (6K):

"My friends and I are doing a Charity Stream! We are raising money for the British Red Cross Covid-19 relief. It will be us playing some games for 19 Hours straight for charity. 100% of the money goes to the British Red Cross charity."

Amritesh was new to the school in the Sixth Form - a lovely young man and an asset to LGS!

I have tried to maintain individual email contact with my form and have really enjoyed receiving their replies and knowing that the regular contact is appreciated.

Mrs Francis, 6K tutor



Snapshots

What have students been doing this week?

We have seen a lot of students using their spare time in lockdown to be creative through artwork or photography or practical crafts.

Some of our form tutors have been setting individual challenges to their form groups related to these creative skills.

Here's one from Year 9....

9C have been taking part in a photography competition last week which is inspired by wildlife or nature. The best entries are shown below, collated as a mood board.

Mrs Toor, 9C Tutor

