

VERULAM VOICE

Issue 26 - 3rd April 2020

Dear Parents, Carers & Pupils

I hope you are all beginning to adjust to the new realities of life without school. I know teachers have found it very difficult and miss their daily interactions with students and each other. This will be the last Verulam Voice this term but we will be in contact over the Easter break if there is any urgent news or important developments.

I am privileged to be in school next week for the Easter holiday opening for Key Workers' children and we will endeavour to make things as stimulating and fun as possible. Parents may not have seen that Verulam featured in this week's on-line edition of the Herts Ad. The link is below:

<https://www.hertsad.co.uk/news/coronavirus-challenges-faced-by-st-albans-academies-1-6589337>

I regret that we have taken the decision to cancel all events and trips that were scheduled for the summer term. In many cases this has been decided by the operators themselves who are closing until the end of July. However, we are currently investigating the possibility of re-arranging both the Lakes and Blue Peris trips for Years 7 and 9 respectively, next academic year. We will be in contact regarding refunds for other trips during the summer term.

Year 11 and 13 Trial Examination Results

These will be published on my Child at School this afternoon on Friday 3rd April.

Year 10 GCSE English Literature results are currently being moderated and will be released after Easter.

Trial Examination Results and Calculated Grades

We would request that you do not contact teachers, heads of subject or senior leadership in relation to your child's trial examination or predicted grades as this is vital to the integrity of the system.

However, please be assured that we have your child's best interests at heart and will ensure a robust, fair and equitable approach is followed by all staff, with further scrutiny from our school leadership team before reaching any final decisions.

Public Examinations 2020 – Centre Assessment Grades

The government has released information to schools, students and parents on how qualifications will be graded and awarded in summer 2020. The link to this information can be found below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcses-as-and-a-level-awarding-summer-2020>

We will be writing to all parents, carers and students regarding this information this afternoon.

I look forward to welcoming all students to the start of the summer term with an assembly on Show My Homework on Monday 20th April. I would also like to wish all students and parents a peaceful and healthy Easter.

HM Commendations:

- ◆ Gabriel Grundy for his hard work and dedication to GCSE History
- ◆ Gregory Pomeroy, Year 10 and James Wells Year 9 for their efforts in Maths.
- ◆ Rocco Tuffnell in 10J for his hard work in English.

P A Ramsey

This week we have also attached a number of communications and useful documents:

- Five Ways for Wellbeing for Secondary Pupils
- Behaviour for Learning Closure
- Home Learning tips for parents
- Year 13 University Bridging Activities
- 101 things to do over Easter
- Promoting positive Mental Health
- Top Button
- NHS Chat poster
- Teen Health poster
- House Points

Weekly Tutor Check-In & Keeping in-touch with students

It is important that all students continue to feel they are part of a school community and have a member of staff they are confident to share information with. The form tutor plays a key role in this. This week, Heads of Year have asked tutors to complete a weekly 'check-in' with all their form group.

Tutors are the first point of call if there are concerns, including attendance and safeguarding. If we were in school, tutors would be the only member of staff to see your child on a daily basis. Keeping in touch with their form and checking in on their academic and pastoral welfare is an essential part of the tutor's role.

If your son/daughter does not reply to their tutor, you may be in receipt of an email or telephone call from the school to check they are ok.

Behaviour for Learning Policy

Teachers are setting work to be completed and we feel it is important to continue to recognise excellent effort and attainment in this work. During this period of school closure, we have adapted our **Behaviour for Learning Policy**. House points remain the same and continue to be awarded, but we are replacing 'Events' with 'Warnings'. These give teachers the opportunity to alert parents / carers to work which is not being completed or not being completed to a satisfactory standard.

Please see the attached **Behaviour for Learning Closure** document for guidance. This will be in operation from Monday 20th April.

Mr A Flack

Deputy Headteacher

Key Worker Pupils

We have contacted all those who have registered as key workers and who indicated they needed their child to attend school over the Easter holidays so that we can plan our provision.

If you registered as a key worker and have not been contacted and would need your child to attend school, please email admin@verulam.herts.sch.uk

Year 13

In preparation for University / Apprenticeships it's vital for Y13s to keep active, both mentally and physically. With that in mind please see the comprehensive (attached) list of online courses to **BRIDGE** the gap between School and Higher Education.

*Mr S Base
Head of Sixth Form & Head of Social Sciences*

Top Button, school magazine

Please find attached the latest edition of our school magazine: Top Button. This edition celebrates the brilliant poetry produced by some of our amazing Year 7 students during the Spring term.

The next edition due out next half term will focus on reading recommendations. If your son has a book he would like to recommend for this edition he should go to google classroom and join our book group. In this 'classroom' he will find a book report assignment he can fill in and submit. I will select the best of these to feature in the next edition of Top Button.

*Mrs P Avery
Director of English*

Immunisations

Due to the current COVID-19 outbreak, the remainder of the immunisation schedule in schools is now paused until July 2020, the end of this academic year. A catch up programme for all students who missed their immunisations during the temporary suspension will be arranged to run alongside the immunisation schedule for the next academic year commencing in September 2020.

Parents /carers can contact the Immunisation Team on 01727 732062 with any questions.

Careers and Learning Support for Adults

Anyone over the age of 19, whether in work or unemployed, can use the services of the National Careers Service. They are professional careers advisers who provide **free, up to date, impartial information and advice to help you move on in work and life**, whether that involves more training, a career change or dealing with redundancy. Their support can boost your self confidence, motivation and skills to help you achieve your goals.

Support includes help with CVs, job searching and applications, employment opportunities, career changes, redundancy support, returning to work after a career break, interview help, and skills training.

When schools return to normal we will be offering support and sessions in person through the BSV Community Programme, but you can access services at the moment through a new telephone support service or by email.

Email NationalCareersServiceNCC@futuresforyou.com or call 0800 917 9419.

*Carole Heselton
Community Links Coordinator
BeauSandVer Consortium
01727 754113
www.bsvcourses.co.uk*

The Thought Fox
by Ted Hughes

I imagine this midnight moment's forest:
 Something else is alive
 Besides the clock's loneliness
And this blank page where my fingers move.

Through the window I see no star:
 Something more near
 Though deeper within darkness
 Is entering the loneliness:

Cold, delicately as the dark snow,
 A fox's nose touches twig, leaf;
Two eyes serve a movement, that now
 And again now, and now, and now

Sets neat prints into the snow
 Between trees, and warily a lame
Shadow lags by stump and in hollow
 Of a body that is bold to come

Across clearings, an eye,
A widening deepening greenness,
 Brilliantly, concentratedly,
Coming about its own business

Till, with sudden sharp hot stink of fox
 It enters the dark hole of the head.
The window is starless still; the clock ticks,
 The page is printed.

Chosen this week by Mr R Skipper