

30 November 2020

Dear Parent/Carers

Covid-19 and School Update – w/c 30 November

As we enter the last three weeks of this term, it is important that I continue to share Covid-19 updates and whole school news. Despite the continued challenges we are facing as a community I remain proud of the response from students, staff and parent/carers. I should be clear that my ambitions for the school consist of more than getting through Covid-19. This is a challenge but we are slowly getting closer to the point where Covid-19 will have less of an impact in our everyday life. When this happens, the school will be ready. I firmly believe that we are well on our way to being recognised as a 'Good' school. This is not our ultimate goal but is an important stepping stone as we strive to create a great school that meets the needs of all our students and is a place where adults also thrive.

Covid-19 Update

Since Monday 23 November, we have had two student cases. There has been one case in Year 7 and one case in Year 10. The Year 7 case led to a group of students needing to self-isolate. The Year 10 case did not lead to further students having to self-isolate as the student was already self-isolating. We have also had two further staff cases of Covid-19. In both cases these members of staff were already off school self-isolating. Mr Hemsley, Deputy Headteacher has written to parent/carers outlining the steps that you can take to help support the school respond to positive cases of Covid-19.

School Update – Academic

Last week Year 11s that were not self-isolating completed a number of mock exams. We call these Pre Public Exams (PPEs). I have been very impressed by the attitude and focus of Year 11s. Results of these will be shared with Year 11 parent/carers in January. We have a number of Year 11s returning tomorrow from self-isolation and they will be following a revised exam timetable. It is important that all students get used to sitting formal exams and in the summer term all year groups will have end of year assessments in the hall or in a classroom if they have an exam concession.

We remain focused on ensuring that your child gets the best learning experience from every lesson. This term we have focused our support on new teachers to the school, and given the challenging circumstances we have been impressed by how well they have adapted to Welling School. To further support staff, experienced teachers started a coaching course last week and they will use these skills to further improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school. We have also made three senior teaching appointments for January 2021. To accommodate these appointments there will be some changes to the timetable for January. A further update will follow regarding this.

School Update – Personal Development

There is no greater priority than making sure your child comes to school everyday feeling safe and happy. Ms Wilson, Intervention Assistant, has led on a range of support for students which will form part of our accreditation for The Diana Anti-Bullying Award. We were delighted that last week our good work was recognised in the Bexley Magazine

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Extra and by the Trust. This week we will be sharing the winners of the Community and Respect Awards and all students have received a link via their Google email address to complete a wellbeing survey.

Parent/carers who have children in the older year groups will know that in the past the school has had the presence of a Safer Schools Police Officer based in the school. I am delighted that this has been reinstated and midway through last week we welcomed PC Senol Bozyigit to our school community. The aim of the Safer Schools strategy is for schools and the police to work closely together to keep young people safe, reduce crime and the fear of crime, and improve behaviour in schools and in local communities. This partnership encourages the police, young people, parent/carers and staff to build positive relationships built on trust and mutual respect. PC Senol Bozyigit will be based at Welling School and will work on four key areas. He will provide positive engagement between young people, parent/carers and staff by being a presence around the school site; improve safety and safeguarding within the school; develop prevention strategies to help students deal with risk as well as supporting victims of crime; and deliver early intervention and promote positive pathways for our students. PC Senol Bozyigit will be introduced to students during tutor time over the coming weeks but in the meantime if your child sees him please encourage them to say hello and introduce themselves.

The school has been given the opportunity to take part in a project that will run jointly between schools and the Metropolitan Police. This is called Operation Compass and I have sent a separate letter to all parent/carers about this.

Finally, in relation to personal development, I would like to recognise how polite and compliant students were last week. Our expectations of students are high and we saw fantastic levels of rewards being awarded. We also had our first student achieve their Gold Badge for rewards. This went to Charlotte Smith in Year 7. An excellent achievement. This is a positive step forward and we are looking to build on this as we do not just want compliant students; we are striving for students that have the skills to help them succeed academically and in life.

School Update – Co-Curricular

In Year 7 students have applied to be an Art Scholar and this week students will be told if they have been successful. These new Art Scholars will join our community project with Bow Arts Trust, which involves the renovation of The School Garden. Year 12 students have been making beautiful reduction lino prints in response to their involvement with the Woolwich Print Fair, examples of which have been tweeted. Welling School has had a long tradition of championing the arts, both visual and performing and I look forward to sharing future updates regarding student achievements.

Last week we also finalised plans to offer The Duke of Edinburgh Award in school. In January 2021 students in Year 9 will start the Bronze Award. The School has also been awarded a financial grant to help cover the costs of setting up the award and purchasing specialist equipment for expeditions.

The School is also excited with our new partnership with Welling United FC. From September 2021 the school will be offering a post-16 football scholarship programme for girls which will allow students to follow the same academic pathways as other students in the 6th Form whilst also being provided with first class coaching and the opportunity to play regular competitive matches. Welling United FC will be running trials and before the end of term we will send out a further update. This partnership will also have wider benefits for girls' football across the school.

Over the last few months we have worked hard to use Twitter (@welling_school) to share key updates and showcase the best of Welling School. We encourage parents who use Twitter to follow us and engage with the school through our social media as it is an easy way to know what is happening in school.

As always, the School remains committed to working with all our parent/carers and I encourage you to contact relevant staff directly or via enquiries@wellingschool-tkat.org if there is anything we can help with.

With very best wishes.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Pett', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr R Pett
Headteacher