



Founded 1125

30<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear Year 11,

Firstly, we hope that you are all safe and well and managing to stay connected and to stay active? We are conscious that the abrupt end to Year 11 and the changes to examinations will have been particularly hard to process.

We are also mindful that you will now have many questions and concerns about the months ahead; we hope that you will now have some direction without too many demands on your time and that the communication about bridging work and the start of Year 12 is clear.

As Mr Lloyd said in his email about bridging work, we have now finished Year 11. As such, we must work together to take control of the time which we have been gifted, and hope you are able to shape this gift for the sake of your own readiness for Year 12 academically, your contribution to the lives of others and your own wellness.

We would like to offer some direction and clarify the support in place for you in the months ahead and to supplement the email you will have received from Mr Lloyd earlier this week.

#### **Student Support and Pastoral Care:**

Your tutors remain committed to supporting you in the months ahead; whilst you have formally finished Year 11 they remain your first point of contact for any concerns or questions. Your tutors will be in touch to confirm individual arrangements for tutoring in the weeks ahead; this is likely to be a regular Teams based session, scheduled for an afternoon. Please receive their time as a sign that we care for you and want to help you be the best you can be – even in a difficult time.

The Student Support team also remain committed to the ongoing care of all students in the school community and as such are available to you for support with specific needs as required.

You are still a part of Reading School, you are valued members of our community and we urge you to ensure that you stay connected to staff and students in the months ahead.

For any specific concerns you have do please contact your tutor, or members of Student Support for other support needs as you would normally do.

#### **Synchronous Learning and Asynchronous Afternoons:**

All other Year Groups are now taking part in lessons during the mornings and other activities in the afternoons. Whilst many of you will be valuing the flexibility of having control of your own time, we would suggest that you commit to a couple of hours of study daily, focussed on the Bridging Work shared this week.

There are a range of Asynchronous Activities taking place in the afternoons and some of you are already contributing to these, both leading and taking part. Whether it is Chess or Chemistry, Cycling or Cooking, Coding or Classics we would suggest that you all get involved in some of these activities, offer your services to support departments or look for opportunities to contribute.

There are opportunities for physical activity from the Strava Club to the Everest Challenge, there are Wellness activities and there are many other opportunities that you can engage with to ensure that you have a balanced diet

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of activity each day. These are published in the Clubs and Societies Team and are also included as an attachment in this email.

For other queries about afternoon activities, please contact Mr Evans.

### **Bridging Work:**

Now you have received detailed bridging work any specific questions regarding bridging work should be sent to Heads of Department. You are welcome to be in contact with staff members about your studies as directed by each department in the instructions provided. You should approach this bridging work as an invitation to further learning in subjects you enjoy that can be used to positively shape the days and weeks ahead of you. Endeavour to behave as if you have started Year 12 and are in school during term time, albeit with flexibility around how you plan to time your studies and your days.

For specific queries about Year 12 please contact Mr Lloyd, Head of Sixth Form who is looking forward to working with you.

### **Economics and Physics:**

As you are aware there are likely to be some issues with regard to Physics and Economics, due to over-subscription in these subjects.

As these two subjects have been identified as particularly over-subscribed, and as being highly demanding courses, decisions have been made to try to mitigate the problems this over-subscription could cause, as early as possible. As a result, **students who intend to study Economics at A-level will be asked to do their Economics Collection on July 6<sup>th</sup> at 11am**, through an online assessment set by the Economics department. There will be different assessments for students who have studied this subject at GCSE and those who haven't. By completing the bridging work you have been given, you will be well-prepared for this assessment.

More details will follow in due course about the specific details of how to access the Economics assessment, but please be aware that this is the intended date for this collection and of its significance. There may well be a small number of decisions made about over-subscription in Economics based on this examination, with lowest performing students asked to choose a different course.

For Physics, the process will be slightly different: external candidates will sit an assessment in June that will help the department benchmark their progress against the internal cohort and identify any students who will not be able to cope with the rigours of the A-level course. All students choosing Physics will then have their collection in the first week of School in September. Returning students should be aware that there may well be a small number of decisions made about over-subscription in Physics based on the September collections, with lowest performing students asked to choose a different course.

It is hoped that through these adjustments to the collections process for these two subjects, there will be greater certainty about the number of spaces available and students will have information as early as possible about their A-level options. Please be aware that we are doing everything we can to minimise the impact of this issue on our students and will continue to communicate with students and parents if anything changes with regard to these subject choices. For example, one option we are working on is putting on an additional set for each of these subjects, but there are considerable logistical difficulties associated with this, so we cannot guarantee this will be possible.

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### **A balanced diet:**

You will all have had a different approach to staying well over recent weeks and there has been much advice on how to manage challenge and anxiety. Whilst your academic studies are important, so is your wellness. With that in mind, we would like to stress the following:

- Keep in contact with friends and families
- Do things you enjoy
- Try and establish daily and weekly routine
- Create spaces that feel comfortable to work and relax in were possible
- Take regular breaks from social media and screen time.

In addition to stressing that none of you should need to be online all day, you should also aim to complete at least 30 minutes of physical activity or exercise on a daily basis, outdoors where possible.

We hope that these guidelines give some direction, without being demanding and trust that they will be helpful in navigating the next few weeks.

Keep in touch and stay safe.

Best Regards,

Mr T. Evans, Mr A. Lloyd, Miss M. Hooker, Mme Fondu, Ms K. Avedisian, Mr Kensington

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