

Dear Parent and Carers

I hope this message finds you all safe and well. I just wanted to give you all a quick update as to how things are in our schools, now that we are all starting to settle into new routines.

Firstly, I would like to thank you for the messages of support we have received over the last week. None of us could have imagined the circumstances we find ourselves in currently. We appreciate your support and patience as we move to new systems and your understanding that sometimes things have to change at short notice.

Free School Meals

A good example of rapid change is our provision for Free School Meals. Up until yesterday, we had been providing Free Schools Meals as a pack-up lunch, which could be collected by students/ parents from school, or from a pick-up point in Yaxley. Yesterday, we were informed that the new restrictions on movement meant that we could no longer ask people to leave their homes. The finance team have done an amazing job of moving us to an online scheme, which we hope to be able to operate for as long as necessary.

We did have a slight technical glitch, which meant some Hampton College Primary Phase parents were sent a message about school meal balances in error by our automated systems: this has now been resolved. Many apologies if you received a message in error!

If your child is entitled to a Free School Meal, you should have received a message about the new system. If you have not, or you are experiencing any difficulties, please contact your child's school. We are keen to support you to ensure that your child's support remains in place for the duration of the school closure.

We have been made aware of there being some scams in relation to free school meals. If you receive any communication about Free School Meals which does not look genuine, please get in touch to verify.

Contacting us

We now have reduced numbers of staff on our sites at any one time. The best way to contact us is via email. We kindly ask that you do not call into the school offices at this time, as we are trying to minimise in person contact, in line with current guidance. We are operating our school phone lines during normal school hours, where possible.

Remote learning

The vast majority of children are now working from home. Each school/ phase has provided online resources and in some cases, hardcopy work packs. The older students, particularly, have maintained virtual contact with teachers, emailing in questions etc. We are also using the telephone to have direct contact with some pupils and families and will look to increase that, if we can. If you have any difficulties with any of the set work or accessing online tasks, please get in touch with your child's school.

Some good news

We received news this week that Hampton College Secondary Phase has received an award for its A level and Post 16 results in 2019. This relates to the outstanding progress made by students during their time in the Sixth Form. Well done to all staff and students who contributed to this success.

This news was somewhat bittersweet, given the uncertainties around this year's GCSE and A level results. However, I would like to reassure you that we will be doing all we can to support current Year 11 and Year 13 students to be awarded the grades they deserve. We look forward to successes in 2020, even if how the results will be arrived at is not yet completely clear. Mr Gilligan will be in touch with current Year 11 and Year 13 students and their families, with updates, as we get them.

Going forward

We will endeavour to keep in regular contact. Individual schools will also be sending out updates regularly.

Finally, I would like to say how much we are missing the children and young people of our schools. Please stay strong and safe in the time away from us. We are still here (if in virtual form) and the care and dedication of the staff is undiminished. We look forward to welcoming everyone back, when circumstances allow.

Helen Price

Executive Headteacher