

23 October 2020

Dear parents

End of term 1 update

In such different times, rather than a newsletter, I felt an end of term update was more appropriate and useful.

Even though it is only 8 weeks, it feels a long time since we opened our doors again in September following lockdown. I am pleased to report that all the new systems, designed to keep students in their year group 'bubbles' and zones, seem to be working well. The students have adapted brilliantly and we are grateful for their support in making the many changes work. One of our support staff emailed me to say:

"I really appreciate the students respecting the new rules and coping so well with the changes. I think our young people have been very resilient to the enforced new normal at school."

Despite the lack of 'real' transition, Year 7 too have settled well. Whilst it is not school as 'normal', it is real school, with real teachers and real friends, and I think we all as a community feel very grateful for that.

Despite the restrictions, there has been lots of exciting learning this term. For example, we might not be able to have Food practical lessons in school, but this has not held back our students in Years 7-9 who have produced these great outcomes at home:

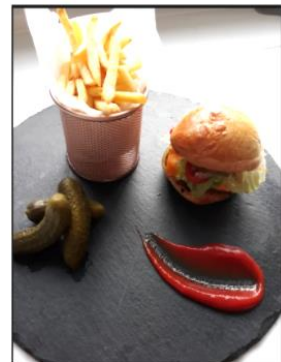
A selection of the fantastic work Gillotts KS3 students are producing at home for their Food lessons.



Hadiyah Zaman Year 7
Knife skills and hob use
Crudites and salsa



Rayaan Ali Year 7
Healthy eating
Stir fry



Amelia Salek Year 8
Burger styling



Stan Lawrence yr7
Gelatinisation
Macaroni cheese



Chloe Govett Year 8
Function of ingredients
Victoria Sponge



Aaron Buckett Year 9
Gluten formation
Calzone

It has been good to see that as well as the core of teaching and tutoring, some wider curricular activities have taken place. Teachers of Year 11 have been offering regular catch-up and revision sessions. The Year 7 virtual games have been great to build bonds within the new tutor groups. It has been good this week to see sports practices getting started again – many thanks for your support with transport as they are now after school. Most notably, we have been able to support 66 students to complete their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Although camping isn't allowed at the moment, students were able to 'complete' the distance of a two day expedition. These are fantastic achievements for all the young people involved.

One of the restrictions at this time is that students cannot share or be loaned equipment. Please could you support us over half term by making sure your child has all of the following:

- Pens
- Pencils
- Colouring Pencils
- Sharpener
- Eraser
- Ruler
- Calculator
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Protractor
- Compass
- White board marker
- Reading Book (Years 7-9)
- Planner

Looking ahead, whilst we have been lucky so far, it seems inevitable that at some point we will have a case of COVID-19 in our community. We have been learning from schools who have already had to manage this. As soon as we know we have a case, we will work with the Department of Health and Public Health England to identify all the close contacts. The definition of close contact is as follows:

A 'contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 anytime from 2 days before the person was symptomatic up to 10 days from onset of symptoms (this is when they are infectious to others). For example, a contact can be:

- people who spend significant time in the same household as a person who has tested positive for COVID-19
- a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including:
 - being coughed on
 - having a face-to-face conversation within one metre
 - having skin-to-skin physical contact, or
 - contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact
- a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes
- a person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive for COVID-19

If your child has a positive test result, we ask that you inform the school as soon as possible. If you get this result at a weekend, please email me: cdarnton@gillotts.org.uk. We will then need a detailed conversation with both parent and child to help us establish who all the close contacts are. We have seating plans for all lessons and tutor time that will help with this. Please note that the expectation is that all students and staff who are close contacts leave the school site as soon as possible. This means you may get an email, text, or phone call during the day asking either for permission for your child to leave, or confirmation that you can come and collect them. Please note students who are close contacts cannot use school transport or public transport to get home. We would be grateful if you would think in advance about how you would be able to support such a request.

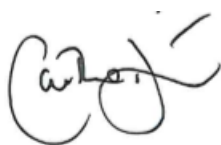
While our local alert level for COVID-19 remains at medium, case numbers are rising in Oxfordshire so I would like to remind you that it is really important we all follow the guidance over the half term break – to make sure we reduce the risk of bringing the infection into the school community when we return. In particular, we would ask you to support your children to **maintain social distancing** and **not socialise in groups larger than 6, indoors or outdoors**.

Turning to face coverings, I would just like to remind parents that these must be worn on all our school buses. Also, were the local alert level to rise, all students would be required to bring a face covering to school, to be worn as follows:

When an area moves to the local COVID alert level 'high' or 'very high', in education settings where year 7 and above are educated, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and pupils when moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. As in the general approach, it will not usually be necessary to wear face coverings in the classroom, where protective measures already mean the risks are lower, and they may inhibit teaching and learning.

Finally, I would like to thank you for all your kind words, support and encouragement. There is no doubt these are hard times but the sense of the community around us has really helped to meet the many challenges. I do hope that despite the restrictions, you will be able to enjoy the half term, and get some rest and relaxation.

Yours sincerely



Catharine Darnton
Headteacher, Gillotts

Interested in teaching? We can help get you started.

As part of our Teaching School role, we work alongside Oxfordshire Teacher Training (OTT - based at the Cherwell School in Oxford) in training potential teachers at primary, special and secondary level. We have a growing number of teachers training **in the South at Gillotts School** - working in schools across the locality. If you are interested in training to teach or know anybody who might be, please contact/encourage them to contact us at teachingschool@gillotts.org.uk for more information.

If you are interested in teaching but would like more information/experience, please keep an eye on our website as we will be hosting some **information events and online Application Support Workshops** (which aim to support people in making successful applications to ITT providers). In addition to that, at Gillotts, we coordinate an **Oxfordshire School Experience Programme (SEP)** which makes it easy for potential applicants to get into schools and get the experiences they need to decide whether teaching might be right for them and then apply for ITT.

Take a look at our website to find out more of what Gillotts as a Teaching School is offering...
<http://gillotts.oxon.sch.uk/teaching-school/teaching-school-overview/>