

17 December 2020

Dear parents

### **End of term 2 update**

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

This has been a very difficult week, with the rising case numbers in the south-east being reflected in cases at Gillotts, and other local schools and colleges. We know it has been a difficult week for you too, responding to our calls and emails, and working out how best to manage for your family. We have particularly valued the messages of support and all the partnership working – thank you. We are pleased to have been able to remain fully open for the full term from September. This in large part due to the dedication of our staff whose commitment to being here every day they can has made this possible.

### **Making a Christmas bubble with friends and family**

I know that it is important to all of us to have contact with family and friends at this time. The government has relaxed the rules about contact between 23 December and 27 December, to allow people to form [Christmas Bubbles](#). Clearly, increased social mixing at this time does increase the risks of transmission of coronavirus, and so increased the risk of further confirmed cases in school in January.

Outside of 23-27 December, the tier system remains in place. As I write this, we are in tier 2, which means no mixing of households indoors, and a maximum of six outdoors. It is possible there will be a move into tier 3, which then also rules out almost all mixing outdoors too.

We would ask families to take care not to exceed the guidance given for mixing, at any point of the holidays.

### **Face coverings**

As you know, when areas are in local restriction tier 2 or tier 3, face coverings should be worn by adults (staff and visitors) and students when moving around indoors, such as in corridors and communal areas where social distancing is difficult to maintain. Face coverings must also be worn on public transport and dedicated school buses. Individual students may be exempted, for reasons of health or disability.

We are finding the number of students without a face covering is increasing considerably. Please can you ensure that your child not only has a face covering but also carries a spare in case these forget/lose/break the original?

If your child is without a face covering, we will contact you and request you bring one into school.

### **Not By Ourselves Alone**

Having the school split into zones has undoubtedly made it more difficult to foster the great sense of community that we hold so important at Gillotts, but nevertheless we have endeavoured to try and ensure students have the opportunity to make positive contributions to the school and wider community throughout term.

Student leaders have been delivering House Assemblies on various topics, the PE department have been running inter-house marathons in PE lessons, we had the Year 7 Virtual Games earlier in the term and more recently year groups have been donating items for the Nomad Food Bank which have been

gratefully received to support local families. The Head Students continue to have some great ideas to raise money for our chosen charity (Plastic Oceans UK), so keep an eye out for more information. After Christmas, their focus will turn to supporting recycling and they will be relaunching the Terracycle Crisp Packet Recycling Scheme as a House competition. Please start holding onto empty crisp packets for donations. As a reminder, you can keep up to date with all the goings on at our school Twitter page: [www.twitter.com/gillottshenley](http://www.twitter.com/gillottshenley).



### Food lessons in Years 7-9

This term we have had to flip the learning, with all the cooking happening at home. Thanks for all your support with this – some great examples below!

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



**Ola Wolska yr8**  
Reduction sauce  
**Spaghetti Bolognese**



**Charlie Lippett Year 7**  
Gelatinisation  
**Macaroni cheese**



**Conal Thompson Year 7**  
Weighing, measuring and  
hob use  
**Pancakes**



**Henry Mahoney Year 9**  
Gluten formation and shaping  
**Calzone**



**Joseph Watts Year 7**  
Gluten formation  
**Bread rolls**



**Flo Wakely Year 9**  
Cooking with rice  
**Paella**



**Jeremy Rubio Year 7**  
Gluten formation  
**Bread roll**



**Zahra Beagin Year 9**  
Dextrinisation  
**Enchiladas**

## **Equipment**

One of the restrictions at this time is that students cannot share or be loaned equipment. Please could you support us 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

## **Behaviour for Learning changes**

Further to communication earlier in the year, this is just to remind parents that we have made temporary alterations to some of our rules and expectations within school in light of the pandemic. Detentions will continue to be after school until further notice. There are no break or lunchtime detentions. You will receive 24hrs notice for these detentions.

Aside from our normal behaviours and consequences, students will get a 1hr after school detention for two pieces of missed homework in one subject during one short term. Students will also get a 1hr after school detention for 2 late arrivals to lessons in one week.

Please support your son/daughter in ensuring they are meeting these and our wider school expectations at all times.

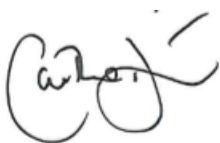
## **Collecting by car**

A couple of reminders please:

- Please do your bit for the environment, support 'Clean Air for Henley' and don't wait with the engine idling.
- If you are collecting on Makins Road, please make sure you leave enough space on the pavement for students to pass – we don't want them to feel they need to deviate into the road.

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 holidays, and get some rest and relaxation.

Yours sincerely



Catharine Darnton  
Headteacher, Gillotts



## Library News Autumn Term 2020

This term the library has been offering remote services to students and many have been taking advantage of the daily availability of 'click and deliver.' Books have been taken over to classrooms at tutor times for students who have requested them. It has been very heart-warming to have regular e-mails from students asking about books and reading recommendations. Some of the new Year 7s spent part of the summer holidays completing 'Reading bingo activities' and these were on display in the library for the first half term.



Year 7 classes were very pleased to be invited up to the library for their fortnightly reading lessons. They have enjoyed using the library and browsing for books, all following COVID 19 guidance. They have shared their reading ideas and have been voting for books nominated for the Berkshire Book Award and the National Children's Book Award. Some weeks they have had the opportunity to take part in other reading and writing activities, such as writing poetry for National Poetry Day in October and more recently, leading up to Christmas, doing book-related quizzes and competitions, making decorations out of old books and taking home gift tag tasks to complete over the holidays.





One class had the opportunity for an online author talk with a chance to ask questions. This was presented by local author Clare Rees. Her book 'Jelly' is set in an alternative universe in which global warming has happened and the only survivors are living on a giant jellyfish. It provoked much interest. Children in the class had the opportunity to buy Clare's book with a signed book-plate. After the success of this event, it is possible that similar events might be possible in the future.

There have been book clubs running in Year group bubbles at lunchtimes for Year 7 and Year 8. Students taking part have been making book trailers, compiling their own Desert Island Books and making reading scrapbooks. Members from both year groups also contributed original portfolio work to be presented to authors and illustrators who won the prestigious top 12 books of the year of the Children's Book Award. From Year 7 the students who took part were:

Izzy Swanwick  
 Lilia Taylor  
 Owen Howard  
 Olivia Samyui-Adams  
 Millie Le Beigge  
 Jan Karpowicz

From Year 8 there was a contribution from Tilly Massey, based on the book Wildspark by Vashti Hardy.



Here are some pictures of the Year 7 Book Club from this term:





Two Year 9 girls, who have been keen library helpers ever since they started Gillotts in Year 7, have been working on some promotional material for the library and hope to be sharing some new bookmarks and their ideas about enjoying reading next term.



Mrs Seddon  
School Librarian