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Dear Parents/Guardians

Coronavirus related issues – we have now completed the 4 week cycle of subject face-to-face support sessions for Year 12. Year 10 sessions will continue over the last week of the term. We are advising any parents of boys who may have fallen a bit behind not to worry as there is plenty of time to 'catch up' in due course and the summer break should be a chance for everyone to recharge batteries. Looking ahead (as a reminder) the A level and GCSE results will be issued as usual on the 2nd and 3rd Thursday in August, that is the 13th and 20th of the month respectively. The grades will be as determined/moderated by the exam boards; in most cases these should be unchanged from the grades submitted by the school to the exam board, so we are hoping that the number of results queries that we have to field is small and manageable. The process needs to be carefully handled for obvious reasons.

September opening – we are in the process of putting together both the outline plans and associated risk assessment. To briefly summarise all students will return from the beginning of the September Term, though there will be a staggered start as usual. The full curriculum will be delivered, and the length of the teaching day will be unchanged though the timings of the school day will be different from the past. There will be year group 'bubbles' as much as is manageable on the very confined BWS school site. The plans and risk assessment will go to staff as soon as possible and will be circulated to governors for their comment/approval towards the end of next week.

Staff departures – just two members of the teaching staff have/are leaving BWS this academic year. Emma Baker (Science Director) left at the end of the spring term of course (thus avoiding lockdown almost entirely!) and Chris Fay (Head of Music) retires at the end of the coming week. There will be a small socially distanced get-together I think for Chris at the end of the week (strictly following HM Govt guidance of course!), and you may wish to watch his last hurrah, a virtual summer concert by a number of the BWS music scholars see:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gAtbecX8OA&feature=youtu.be>).

Live webinars – we have now completed 3 for Year 12 2021 recruitment, 2 for incoming Year 12 students for September 2020 and another 4 (out of a series of 5) for incoming Year 7 boys for this September. Further filming is still going on for more online materials, and clearly this type of online communication is here to stay in the future as an adjunct (rather than a replacement) for our more traditional open sessions.

This is likely to be the last of my weekly updates for this academic year. Looking back is a strange experience, as the broad hinterland of school closure makes those times of normal working seem so distant. I can't wait to get back to something that seems closer to what a school should be doing – and that is what September seems to promise. One day there will surely be (as the PM said) 'Tales from Lockdown', but in the meantime there is much thinking and planning to do so that the new academic year works. Thank you for reading all this stuff, thank you for all of your support for boys and staff and enjoy whatever the summer brings...

Best wishes

S D Smallwood
Head Master