

April 2020



Dear Parents/Guardians

After we reach the end of what I am sure you will agree is a highly unusual term for us all, I am writing to firstly thank you and our fabulous students for your engagement with online learning, for bearing with us as we still try to find the right balance and of course, for your resilience! I am sure that the frustrations we may feel are put into context as we are reminded of the heroic efforts being made by others as they treat the unwell and provide critical services in the effort to fight the Coronavirus. Thank you, therefore, for adhering to the government directive 'to stay at home' in support of saving lives.

I must also thank our wonderful staff who have really stepped up to multiple challenges, including ongoing setting and monitoring of online learning, responding to emails from students and parents to provide guidance, face to face working to supervise the children of key workers and making telephone calls to parents and carers to ensure the well-being of the most in need. Thank you...what a team!

With regard to distance learning work, we have surveyed parents, students and staff and have identified a common thread being that in many cases, there is too much work for an hour of timetabled lesson. We certainly do not want our students (or parents/carers!) feeling snowed under, especially when so many other things are being juggled in households. Learning should still be interesting and engaging, not highly stressful and unmanageable. Staff have received the message of concern about high volume of work and are going to scale back a bit.

In support of this, from 20<sup>th</sup> April, we will be building in an independent study day. On this day teachers will not set any additional tasks for students. Therefore, the day will allow students an opportunity to catch up on work, respond to feedback, attempt some of the challenge tasks or simply consolidate work. This day will move throughout the timetable so that the same subject is not hit all the time and students will not be at a disadvantage. Hopefully this will allow us to achieve a better balance for all. We will review this approach later.

Independent Study days					
Week Commencing	April 20th	April 27th	May 4th	May 11th	May 18th
Monday	Year 7	Year 11,12,13	Year 10	Year 9	Year 8
Tuesday	Year 8	Year 7	Year 11,12,13	Year 10	Year 9
Wednesday	Year 9	Year 8	Year 7	Year 11,12,13	Year 10
Thursday	Year 10	Year 9	Year 8	Year 7	Year 11,12,13
Friday	Year 11,12,13	Year 10	Year 9 (Bank holiday)	Year 8	Year 7

## FAQ's

### Are students expected to do any work over Easter?

Teachers have been asked not to set work over the Easter break. Some have set optional work or have asked students to take part in competitions. For example:

History – focusing on VE day celebrations

Design Technology – Design clothing out of rubbish!

Art – Home is where the art is project.

Other subjects have also set more broader based activities that are optional but these may also keep young minds engaged over Easter.

### **I need to get in contact with school – How can I?**

A communications list can be found here – During Easter if you need support with any pastoral/welfare issues please contact the school. [Click here](#)

For queries regarding subjects please feel free to email staff but be aware that staff are on Easter break and any response may take longer than usual.

### **Have welfare systems or processes changed during the closure?**

Yes – The majority of school policies continue to operate, but with changes in working practices support resources can be found on the school’s website under closure information. [\(Click Here\)](#)

### **I have a question about Free School Meals?**

An updated FAQ’s section has been added to the school’s website [\(Click Here\)](#)

### **I am a key worker and wish to apply for childcare during Easter?**

As you will be aware, the Government has made provision for vulnerable children and children of critical workers to continue attending education and childcare settings during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The guidance from the Department for Education states that ‘Every child who can be safely cared for at home should be’, but there will be some parents who will need to access childcare provision.

To book a childcare place at Oldbury Wells School, please complete the form below and email it to [closure@oldburywells.com](mailto:closure@oldburywells.com) by 9am on the Friday of the week before the provision is required.

Please [click here](#) to download the childcare Application Form

### **I am parent/carer for a year 11/13 pupil – Is there any further information?**

We have received advice from OFQUAL today – [\(click here\)](#)

Once we have processed this and established a clear way forward, we will be in touch with parents of Years 11 & 13 students.

These are most challenging and unprecedented times and we wish everyone well in the weeks to come.

Yours faithfully



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Executive Headteacher



Lisa Thomas  
Principal Deputy

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