



3 April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers, Students, Governors, Old Olavians and Grandparents

We would normally be finishing the Spring Term with a whole school assembly, the O-Factor, the clearing of lockers and the handing out of the Summatim. Unfortunately, the best I can do is to share a link to the publication, show you the front cover and repeat my overall summary of what has been the most unusual term. Thank you to Mr Budds and Mrs Taylor for the work they have done on the Summatim, which has led to this finished publication. The full version can be found on the school website by following this [link](#).



'I hope you enjoy this snapshot of endeavour, ingenuity and achievement. Despite being one of the shortest terms so much has taken place, especially when you consider the challenges we have encountered due to the Coronavirus.

This term saw again our whole school Wellbeing Week with Year 9 enjoying a cross curricular day before half-term. Students also engaged with sessions on topics such as resilience, the impact of the brain on wellbeing, mindfulness, and the power of sport. Mr Haines and Mrs Alicia Drummond delivered inspiring talks to parents across the year groups with tips and techniques on how to support young people as they grow up. The hope is that the focus on wellbeing will reiterate amongst our student body the importance of promoting good mental health.

Well done to the 29 students who have received Oxbridge offers this year. This has increased by

one from last year. These offers are in a wide range of subjects, including Medicine, Economics, Natural Sciences, German, Russian, Music, History, Politics, Psychology, Classics, Engineering, Mathematics and Statistics. All of Year 13 must be congratulated for their excellent work on their applications, their offers and their achievements as a whole and we hope these give them every incentive to excel in their future endeavours.

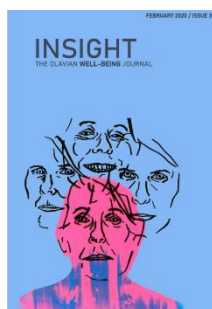
It has been pleasing that Year 7 students have accompanied our Outreach Co-ordinator, Mr Bassett, to Midfield and St. Mary Cray Primary Schools this term. The boys supported Mr Bassett by working with the students, and time was given during each session to field questions about 'life' at a grammar school.

I would like to thank all the whole school community for everything they have done to keep our school going throughout this difficult term. I continue to feel very positive about the school and our work in enabling our students to be happy and successful. The support of my colleagues together with the engagement of our students is allowing this work to flourish.'

Now schools across the UK are closed to most families, there is no doubt this is a worrying time for many parents and carers. Children will also be spending more time online at home while they do their schoolwork and socialise with friends. Whilst using technology can provide hours of education and important social opportunities for children and young people during this period, it can present risks. The following website, <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk> highlights four things you can do to help keep your child safe online during this unsettling time. If your child is also finding it difficult to cope when there is so much changing at the moment, Childline and their counsellors want to support your child through this. Their [website](#) is available 24 hours a day. Your child can also continue to receive support from other young people on the message boards. TPC Therapy have also put together some [advice](#) for parents/carers during the Coronavirus outbreak on a young person's behaviour, keeping routines, filling time and looking after yourself.

I would like to highlight some important changes to our [Child Protection policy](#). The school recognises COVID 19 presents the school community with numerous challenges. For all pupils including those learning remotely child protection remains a key priority. Following on from Government advice and guidance we have amended the Child Protection policy to reflect the changing nature of education in the current climate. It is also important pupils and parents/carers are aware of the dangers of peer on peer abuse. Concerns can be reported to any member of staff but often the first point of contact would be the Form Tutor, Head of Year or Mrs Maxwell (Designated Safeguarding Lead). Contact details can be found on the school website.

I know students in Year 10, Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 will still be worrying understandably about the grades that they will be given for their GCSEs, AS Levels and A Levels. At the time of writing the Newsletter, we are still awaiting detailed guidance from Ofqual about how this process will work, and we will be following this carefully. What is important is that the process is well thought through and works in the best interest of students. We greatly appreciate that many of you will have concerns about all of this. We would like to reassure all of you that everyone involved is working hard and with great sensitivity to make this fair. Above all, this process will only work if it is done in a consistent, fair and ethical way. All students affected by this deserve nothing less.



Congratulations and thank you to Mrs Maxwell and the students who contributed to the third edition of 'INSIGHT', the Olavian Wellbeing Journal, which can be found on the [school website](#). In the foreword Mrs Maxwell states 'This journal demonstrates how Olavians engage in research and writing far beyond the curriculum in a measured and thoughtful way. The articles here are varied, challenging and poignant and show our thinking needs to be constantly challenged. I am grateful to all of those involved in putting this journal together and hope it provides a moment of reflection.'

I know all our students will be doing some amazing work out there and I would appreciate being able to share them through the Newsletter, [St. Olave's website](#) and Twitter page - [@saintolaves](#). Our email address is publicityteam@saintolaves.net. Do not forget to include all the details along with a high-resolution photo you are willing to share and have published.

There has been outstanding work being done remotely by our students and staff. Year 8 student, Alfie, is releasing a piece of saxophone music at 5:00 pm every day so you can have an uplifting and consistent experience during the period of lockdown. His website can be found by following this [link](#).

Dr Bradley shared the following with me earlier this week: 'Being isolated at home has, by no means, prevented our students from engaging in practical work. One of the topics covered in Year 13 relates to how organisms can become habituated to stimuli. This means that they learn, through experience, that stimuli that cause them no harm can be ignored. In the case of the snails, gently touching them between the eye stalks with a cotton wool bud for the first time results in immediate withdrawal of the stalks, which gradually then re-emerge over a period of seconds. By the 10th time they are touched in this way, the snails have learnt that the repetitive 'touch' stimuli causes them no harm and do not withdraw their eye stalks at all! They have become habituated to the stimuli of 'touch' and can focus on more threatening (avoiding dry conditions) or rewarding (smell of food) stimuli. I am sure that we can all relate to this, having experienced



habituation to the stimuli of 'itchy' clothes labels. It also admirably explains why children have learnt to ignore our threats to confiscate mobile telephones or turn off Xboxes, if we never carry them out! Students studying A level Biology have to demonstrate the acquisition of practical skills throughout



the duration of the course. Here you can see a 'still' from a video (thank you Melissa) uploaded in response to a set assignment, demonstrating just how well our students are rising to the challenges necessitated by our current situation. Well done Year 13 Biologists and keep up the good work.' Continuing with work being carried out remotely, this beautiful periodic table island was created recently by Year 12 student, Sarah, after reading 'The Periodic Table' by Peter Atkins.

With regards school closure, the school remains fully closed until further notice as the need to be open for children of key workers is currently not required. Staff will still be able to be contacted by email, and contact details can be found on the school website. **Daily work will not be set for your child by the teachers over the Easter holiday.** This is a period where both staff and pupils need to recover, re-energise and focus on other things rather than academic work. Daily work setting will recommence after the Easter holiday. There is still plenty of enrichment that students can take part in as I highlighted last week. Additionally, similar activities have been either shared by teachers, can be found via this [link](#) to resources in the TES or can be seen below:

- I know we will all be disappointed that we have missed this year's O-Factor. Not to worry as Gareth Malone has started a '[Great British Home Chorus](#)' where he is running rehearsals on YouTube and sheet music is also provided. Rehearsals are good quality, engaging and it is inspiring to be part of a larger national effort. He has started with 'You Are My Sunshine'.
- You may have seen that the BBC is running '[Culture in Quarantine](#)', a season of recorded plays including plays from the RSC and the Old Vic.
- Last Friday evening, I watched Peter and The Wolf as the [Royal Opera House](#) is broadcasting a different recording of a ballet or opera every week. This took me back to my Year 8 Music lesson many years ago.
- The National Theatre is going to be screening one of its recent productions every week – details [here](#).
- Amazon have released a large number of books for free on Kindle, including CGP and Oxford revision guides and workbooks. You can [browse the selection here](#).

- [Raspberry Pi](#) have created a set of projects for people to try at home. They range from total beginner to advanced programming projects for all the family.
- Explore the [Houses of Parliament](#) on this 360° virtual tour.

I would still like to stress again that if you are a key worker and would be unable to work in the event of this ongoing school closure, we will fully support you and reopen the school to supervise your child. We ask that, if possible, you give 24 hours' notice and contact Ms Rochelle Maxwell (rmaxwe@saintolaves.net) if your child is in Years 7 to 11 and Mr Matthew Birtchnell (mbirtchnell@saintolaves.net) if your child is in the Sixth Form, specifying your role as a key worker. Please do not send your child to school without making us aware. This will allow us to plan our provision and ensure all students are safeguarded appropriately within school. Your child is highly likely to be the only child if they do come into school.

Form Tutors and the pastoral team will still be able to provide pastoral support to pupils and should be the first point of contact for non-subject specific concerns. Contact details can be found on the school website. Please be sure to include your child's full name and form group to ensure the message reaches the intended recipient. In addition to the pastoral support structures common to all year groups (of Form Tutor, Head of Year and Assistant Headteacher), the school has other avenues of pastoral support. The School's Chaplain, School Counsellor, and Safeguarding Team can offer additional support and advice for students facing a range of difficulties. We will continue to still make referrals to external agencies as deemed necessary.

Mr Kenward has asked me to inform you that this year's Sports Dinner has been postponed and we will look for an alternative date later in the year.

There will be no formal Newsletter over the next two weeks due to the Easter holiday. I will update you with any important news during the holiday if it is essential.

Look after yourselves and your families.



Andrew Rees

Headteacher

The [St. Olave's website](#) and twitter page - [@saintolaves](#) has many more stories of student endeavour and success. Please do keep sending me news items and student successes either via colleagues or email. The email address is publicityteam@saintolaves.net. Do not forget to include all the details along with a high-resolution photo you are willing to share and have published on the school website.

If you would like to donate into the Voluntary Fund to support the development of our school and enhance learning, and you are not already doing so, please follow this [link](#) to the Virgin Money Giving webpage.
