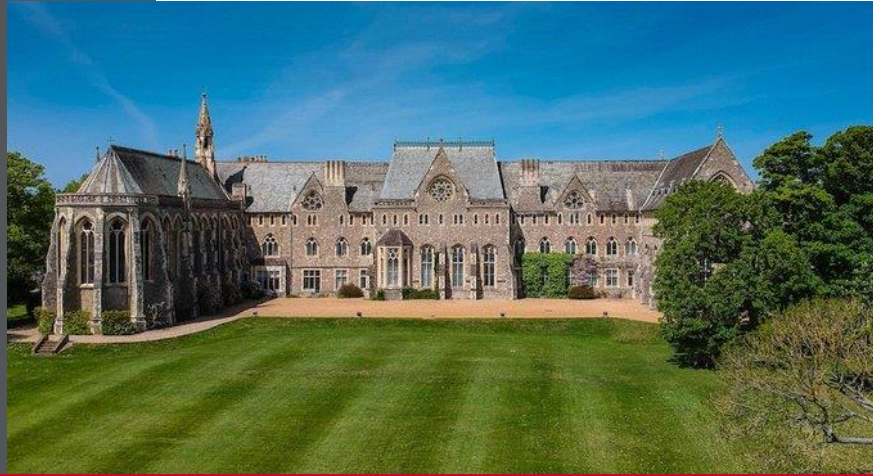




ST EDMUND'S SCHOOL CANTERBURY



Senior School Newsletter

11th September 2020

Dear Parents,

It's good to be back!

The last two weeks have flown by and have been a tough learning curve for everyone.

We now have bubbles, temperature checks, one-way systems and a complete reconfiguration of the school timetable. That is a potentially disorientating set of circumstances. However, the St Edmund's community has responded brilliantly and a new, strange kind of normality is definitely embedding itself...



I am very grateful to pupils, parents and staff for adapting so well. The last week has gone remarkably smoothly given the circumstances and it has been a huge collective effort to make it work.

And, importantly, it's been a very busy, productive time in terms of teaching, learning and co-curricular activities...



Assessment (post Lockdown)

In the coming weeks, all Senior School year groups will have an initial period of assessment and baseline testing to ascertain performance levels and knowledge/skills gaps created by the lockdown period. In many ways, this fits in with our standard practice for this time of year (baseline CAT4 testing for example). The purpose of these tests is diagnostic and pupils should not be concerned. The results will enable us to develop informed and timely responses to problems and (where necessary) put in place additional support, particularly for those pupils taking public examinations in Summer 2021.

L5 Academic Scholars

Mrs Shearer reports on the new scholars programme:

"This week, we launched the L5 Academic Scholar's Programme, with Dr Caiazza presenting a lecture entitled '*Where the infectious pestilence did reign: How the plague may have influenced Shakespeare's writing*'. In the session, pupils explored extracts from Shakespeare's tragedies, in relation to how he used the plague to comment on poor leadership, religion and society's attitude towards medical science. Dr Caiazza was most impressed by the academic curiosity and active participation of the students, who tackled some challenging material and she reports that the level of discussion would not have been out of place in an A-level English lesson. Future lectures will take place on Wednesdays, Week B only, from 4.30-5.30pm. Mr O'Connor will lead the next session on the topic of "*The artist Ilya Repin and the Russian Revolution*".

If any parents would like to present to the L5 students on their area of specialism, please email Mrs Shearer.

Skills and Services

Friday Skills and Service begins today.

The Sixth Form will be hearing from a special guest speaker (and former parent) Clive Triance. A highly successful international businessman and advisor, Clive's topic for discussion is "Cognitive Change of Tomorrow". He will be exploring how, in the very near future, we will have to adapt to Ai, robotic engineering, data mining, cognitive thinking technologies, robots, natural voice technology and natural language technology. I am very grateful to Clive for giving his time so generously and sharing his expertise on this fascinating and important topic.

The L5 will all be with Mr Kincaid beginning their Outdoor Education course.

The M5 and U5 (in separate locations of course), will be choosing from a variety of offerings such as Duke of Edinburgh, CCF, Coaching Skills, Debating, Stage Crew, Practical Science and many more.

The full programme will begin in two weeks' time.

Sports News

The Sports staff have been enjoying getting back into the swing of PE and Games lessons. The pupils seem equally happy to be back to school and have worked hard over the last two weeks, some building further on the increased fitness they developed in lockdown, others rebooting their fitness, skills and games play. We have been very lucky with the weather, enabling everyone to be outside as much as possible and embracing the chance to simply be together again for sport.



It was a hive of activity around the site yesterday afternoon with hockey on the Astro, fitness and Ultimate Frisbee on the grass, Badminton in the Sports Hall, and strength and conditioning in the Health and Fitness suite. The senior footballers welcomed Will Rourke and John Tapley from Chelsea FC Foundation for their session. It was a glorious afternoon and the boys were certainly put through their paces. We are looking forward to developing our collaboration with the Foundation further over the coming year.

The L5 and M5 footballers and hockey players were out in force on Tuesday. It was fantastic to see so many still wanting to be involved in team games. Basketball, girls' cricket and fitness were also on the menu, keeping everyone active and busy.

We were delighted with the uptake for strength and conditioning session this week. Long may that continue! Here are the L5 during their warm up!





Boarders' Line

The Boarders enjoyed their first socially distanced outdoor line on Wednesday evening. It was great to see some new faces and welcome our existing boarders back to St Edmund's. Dr Jones and Ms Florence provided updates on our COVID-19 arrangements, news of the 'Tidy Room Prizes', details on upcoming film nights and bubbled boat trips along the River Stour. There is clearly plenty to look forward to. Thanks to an unnamed benefactor (who is well-known at Dominos Canterbury), a consignment of pizza and choc ices arrived unexpectedly and everyone enjoyed a slice or two!



Virtual Open Day

This year we will be running a virtual Open Day from 930-1030am on Saturday 3rd October. For COVID-19 reasons, we have decided not to have pupils in and there will not be any actual tours of the school site.

Below is the necessary link for the virtual event. Feel free to forward this to any families you know who might be interested in the school:

<https://www.stedmunds.org.uk/admissions/open-events/>

Have a great weekend, stay safe and thanks for your continuing support.

Kind regards,

Edward O'Connor
Head