



Dear Parents,

So, our first post lockdown half-term is over. I'd like to start by thanking teachers, parents and pupils for their forbearance. The shift to teaching in bubbles is challenging for everyone but it has worked very effectively. COVID continues to provide challenges for us all and there will undoubtedly be further difficulties to overcome through the winter. However, "so far so good" and I am very grateful to the whole St Edmund's community for making this work.



Public Examinations 2021

The government this week announced that it intends for GCSEs and A-Level examinations to take place this summer. However, they will start three weeks later. The main examination period will be from 7th June-2nd July apart from the English and Maths GCSEs, which will be held before the May half-term. Results are scheduled to be published on 24th August for A-levels and 27th August for GCSE.

The details are yet to be provided and the teaching unions and other school associations like HMC are in ongoing dialogue with the government. Circumstances may change radically during the coming months. We will continue to prepare our students for the scheduled examinations but will also gather the necessary progress data to support Centre Assessed Grades ("CAG"s) should the government change its mind and revert back to the system used last summer. To this end, we have been thinking carefully about our assessment processes and will be running a rigorous mock examination and progress tests for Upper Fifth and Sixth Form prior to Christmas...



ARCs and Mock Examinations

ARCs for Upper Fifth and Upper Sixth will follow immediately after half-term. They are a little later than usual. However, we wanted to allow students to settle back into school properly and also conduct a variety of post-lockdown assessments in September. As the ARC grades could potentially be used to inform CAGS for examination year groups, it is important that they are an accurate reflection of student performance.

U5, L6 and U6 will receive a 'standard ARC' just after half term (w/c 10th November). This will provide a 'mark' for Effort and for Organisation along with a Predicted Grade.

These year groups will undertake assessments (mocks/progress tests) towards the end of the term, which will be reported in Exam report cards issued at the very end of term.

L5 and M5 will receive a 'standard ARC' mid-way through the second half of Michaelmas Term. This will enable us to report on progress since baseline testing as most subjects will have undertaken topic tests just before or after half term and will be able to reflect on how pupils have settled in to the new curriculum (new to SS for L5 and new GCSEs for M5).

Sixth Form Progress Tests will run w/c 23rd November (week A). Both year groups will have Mon 23rd off timetable to revise. U6 will have Tues 24th and Wed 25th as additional revision days (as these could prove to be important tests that feed into eventual CAGs).

L6 will have Progress Tests on Tues 24th and Wed 25th November

- Tues 24th: Morning = block A subject
- Tues 24th: Afternoon = block B subject
- Wed 25th: Morning = block C subject
- Wed 25th: Afternoon = block D subject

U6 will have Progress Tests on Thurs 26th and Fri 27th November

- Thurs 26th: Morning = block A subject
- Thurs 26th: Afternoon = block B subject
- Fri 27th: Morning = block C subject
- Fri 27th: Afternoon = block D subject



ARCs and Mock Examinations Continued...

U5 mocks will run w/c 30th November (week B).

The plan will be:

- Mon 30th: Morning = Maths (paper 1)
- Mon 30th: Afternoon = English Language
- Tues 1st: Morning = English Literature
- Tues 1st: Afternoon = Maths (paper 2)
- Wed 2nd: Morning = Science*
- Wed 2nd: Afternoon = Science*
- *set 1 different papers from sets 2-4
- Thurs 3rd: Morning = block A subject
- Thurs 3rd: Afternoon = block B subject
- Fri 4th: Morning = block C subject
- Fri 4th: Afternoon = block D subject
- Mon 7th: Morning = Physics for set 1 science pupils only

Poetry Competition

I am pleased to announce that after half-term we are launching a Senior School Poetry Competition. Details will follow soon but the key points are:

- it is part a whole-school competition;
- there will be prizes in Senior School for the best Senior and Junior entries, as well as prizes for the runner-up in each category;

My thanks to Mr Whitman for organising this excellent event.



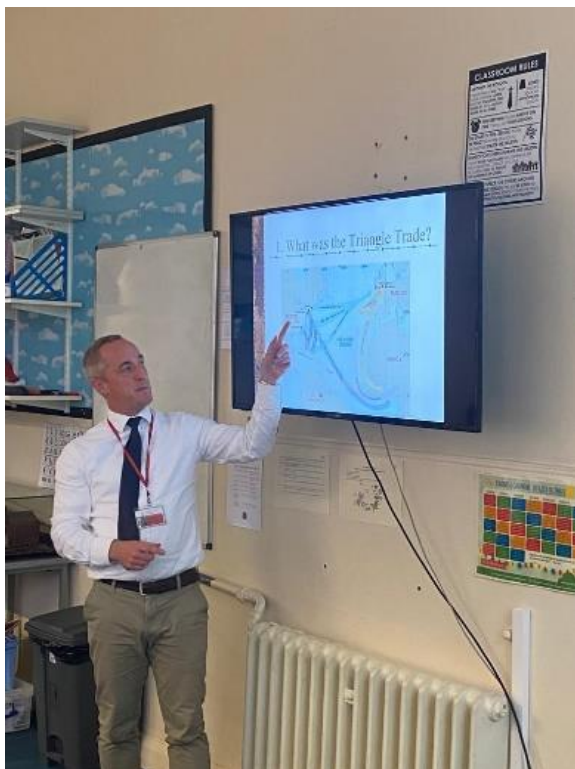
Geography Society Competition!! Modelling river landforms...



- Calling all lower fifth geographers... We would like to challenge you to **build your own 3D model of any river feature** over the half term holiday.
- You might build a waterfall, some interlocking spurs, an Ox bow lake or a delta perhaps..
- The Sixth form Geography society will be judging..make the models clear (add labels maybe) and imagine that they are being used to teach someone else about the features you include.
- Use anything you like to make them. Don't make them too big! We have to store them somewhere! Your finished model should fit within an A4 sheet of paper.
- Please bring your entries up to the Wagner office, before registration on **Friday 6th November**. Make sure your name is on it.
- Have fun!!

Black History Month

Coinciding with Black History month, the history department have been teaching the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the L5. This week they have studied the origins of the trade along with the conditions on board the slave ships during the middle passage. The journey from West Africa to the Americas was up to two months long and the pupils have been examining primary source material providing accounts of the suffering of the slaves.



The U5 historians have also been focusing on topics related to Black History Month. For their coursework they have been looking at the contribution made by Martin Luther King to the Civil Rights Movement in the USA during the 1950s and 1960s. The essay was started during lock down when events in the USA made many of the students think even more carefully about race issues globally, but especially in America. Most of the students have reflected upon this in their essays which was excellent to see.



Art Department - Ceramics

The U5th pupils have been making the most of their access to the Ceramics studio this week by producing responses to the slab work process. The theme for their investigations, prior to making, has been on gaining inspiration from the Aztec and Inca Empires.



Pumpkin Making...

It wouldn't be October in boarding without twilight trails of grinning gourds in the dining hall at St Edmund's and our boarders never fail to disappoint with their creativity when it comes to carving celebratory pumpkins. It was a spook-tacular socially distanced evening in year group bubbles and much fun was had by all!





Watson Pizza Party II

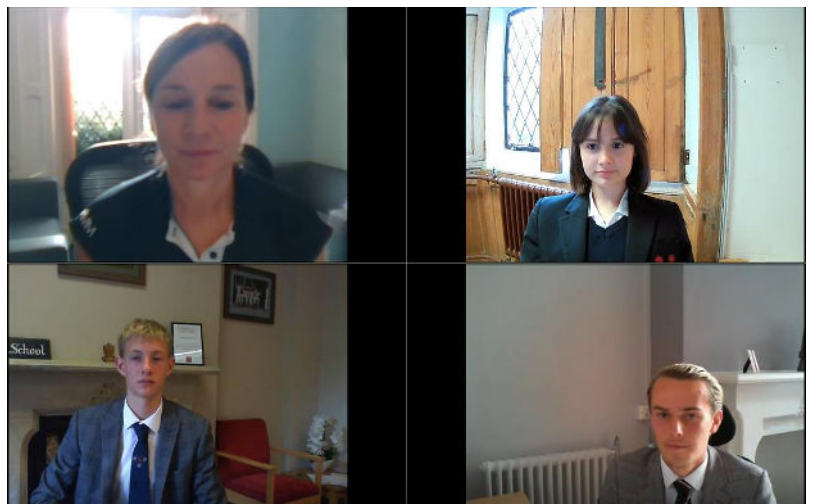
Mr Anderson and Mr Hodge have developed the Watson pizza making parties into a fine art. U5 enjoyed their party on Monday and it was the Sixth Form shindig on Wednesday. A total of 36 pizzas were made and enjoyed this week - a real treat at the end of a busy and productive half term.



Virtual Sports Fest

Mrs Stears reports...

"Our first Virtual Sports Fest, held on Saturday 10th October, was a huge success. Mrs Millard compered the event and pupils Charlotte, Connor and Ali did an outstanding job answering sports-related questions during the Q&A. A huge thank you goes to the Junior School and Senior School Sport Departments (and Mr Sell!) for putting together such engaging video content for the attendees to enjoy which really did showcase just how superb sport at St Edmund's is. We have received excellent feedback from those who attended the event, including: 'It was informative, interesting, clear and very honest. It has piqued Tommy's interest even more - he discovered sports and trips that he did not know St Edmunds catered for...he is excited to come to St Edmunds. Many thanks for inviting us to take part.'"





GCSE Pod

A reminder to all Year 10 and 11 families about the value of GCSE Pod. You may recall that the school subscribed to this excellent learning platform to support remote learning during lockdown. However, it continues to be a brilliant resource for consolidating learning. All the online lessons and assessments are syllabus specific so provide clear and relevant help. Do encourage your children to make the most of this platform – it's a great support for their in-class learning.



Introduction to Social Media for Parents

This practical guide for parents and carers whose children are using social media platforms was developed by Internet Matters, NSPCC, Parent Zone, and UK Safer Internet Centre:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Internet-Matters-Guide-Official-UK-Social-Media-Guidance.pdf>

TikTok is a very popular app with young people. Did you know there's a minimum age of 13? Click through for detailed information and safety settings for TikTok from Childnet - <https://www.childnet.com/blog/tiktok-an-updated-guide-for-parents-and-carers>

Please do contact us if you would like to discuss online safety.



Mathematics Clinics

Week A U5 Tuesday 14:00, AML

Week B L5 Tuesday 14:00, CDJ/ELW

Week B M5 Tuesday 14:00, ELW/CDJ

Sixth Form: contact teacher directly for an appointment

Dr Jones is also giving classes in advanced IGCSE topics on Saturdays mornings online. Those interested in participating should email him at erj@stedmunds.org.uk.

Science Clinics

Week A U5th 1.20 Lab 2 - Monday Biology, Tuesday Chemistry, Wednesday Physics

Week B M5th 1.50 Lab 2 - Monday Biology, Tuesday Chemistry, Wednesday Physics

Have a great half-term, stay safe and thanks for your continuing support.

I am taking annual leave from 17th-22nd October (walking the wild and windy cliffs of Devon) but I can be contacted in an emergency on 07976 529620.

Kind regards,

Edward O'Connor

Head