



# THE JOHN FISHER SCHOOL

Headteacher: Mr P E McCullagh BSc (Hons), PGCE, MA, NPQH

Peaks Hill  
Purley  
Surrey  
CR8 3YP

31st March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you again as parents/carers for supporting us with your son's education during the partial opening of school this term. Without your tireless efforts, our students would have experienced an even greater disruption to their education. One of the initiatives which was widely appreciated, was 'Wellbeing Wednesday'. It is important that we all continue to consider our Mental Health, even though our students and staff are back involved in face-to-face lessons during Wednesday afternoons. The surveys the school conducted during the partial opening indicated how difficult it was at home for some; we have also started to recognise the impact of the extended time away for some students who will certainly be needing lots of our support moving forward.

It was reassuring from the survey findings to learn that parents/carers really appreciated the support from the school, to include initiatives such as 'Workbooks on Wheels', 'Words on Wheels' as well as support with I.T hardware, the welfare telephone calls and the various challenges offered by different subject departments ('The Masked Singer' was a particular favourite!) It has been very evident how pleased the students were to return to school after some testing times at home with attendance at 98%, which tells its own story. The team of staff have worked well with those students (and in some cases parents/carers) who were nervous about returning to school. I would also like to thank you for the ongoing messages of support we received whilst we were only partially open. Here are some examples:

*'Thank you for all you have done during this difficult period. It is truly appreciated.'*

*'With thanks for all of the help and support you have given to our boys during this difficult time'*

*'Thank you to all the team at John Fisher for your hard work and dedication in helping the boys get through these unprecedented times.'*

*'Thank you also to your colleagues and you for all your patience, commitment, and relentless hard work throughout this lockdown'*

*'Thank you for all of the extra work and support you have given the boys through this very difficult time. It is very much appreciated.'*

*'To all the staff at The John Fisher School, thank you so much for everything that you have and continue to do for the boys. Your commitment and dedication in such difficult circumstances is truly appreciated'*

*'With thanks to all at JFS. Your support and understanding during this unforgettable year has been much appreciated'*

Something most of us will have realised and reflected on during the pandemic, is that we can find happiness even in the simplest of pleasures, and that helping others brings great fulfilment. Jesus modelled for us that we can find much happiness in demonstrating love to others and establishing fruitful relationships. For us to grow as followers of Christ we must let go of material items and those things which we may overindulge in. Lent has provided us with another opportunity to test our will power and resilience. Generosity was a signature of Jesus's life, and as there are many who are significantly poorer due to the Coronavirus, we now have a duty to support these people moving forward. Every day we become more aware of the suffering of families and friends. As we move slowly out of lockdown, more families will be affected by furloughing and redundancy and we must keep them in our prayers.

The school now has its very own on-site clothing bank. This allows us to support The Rocking Horse Foundation and raise additional funds for the school. Please find attached a photograph which shows what can/cannot be put in it. We would like to give parents/carers the opportunity to drop off any donations over the Easter period and so Mr. Dean will be on site on Thursday 8th April 1.00pm-2.00pm and Wednesday 14th April 1.00pm-2.00pm to receive donations. Please arrive at the front of school and ensure *all donations are tied up in bags*.

As we move into the summer term, we hope to be able to use our playing fields much more again. We will then be able to give our students further opportunities for sport and recreation, with the possibility of an 'Enrichment Day' on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> June after the May half term break.

Here are some key dates for the next half term:

- **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April** - Students return to school
- **Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April** - Funeral of Joe Lunn (former student and staff member who recently died on his 19<sup>th</sup> birthday) Remote teaching for Years 7-10
- **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April - Year 8 Parents/Carers:** A reminder that Parent Teacher Meetings will take place via 'Zoom' on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> April from 4:30-7:30pm. Bookings will be available to be made on Edulink on Thursday, 22nd April. 'Zoom' details for each Year 8 teacher will be shared prior to the event.
- **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May** - Year 9 Parent Teacher Meeting via 'Zoom': Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May
- **Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May** - John Fisher School Association (JFA) Meeting for parents/carers
- **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May** – INSET Day

I would ask you to be mindful when driving outside the school gates particularly when dropping off your son/s in the morning. In the summer term we are hopeful many more students will choose to walk or cycle to school. If you are going to continue to drop students off in the mornings, please avoid making a 'U' turn directly outside the front of the school to prevent accidents.

You will be aware that the school has shown flexibility since the students have returned this half term regarding haircuts. Students should not be tempted to get a noticeably short or extreme haircut or a line/s in their eyebrows with the re-opening of hairdressers on 12<sup>th</sup> April. The students are also fully aware that du rags are not permitted in school. We will be monitoring uniform and appearance closely when we return to maintain the school's high expectations. Blazers should be worn to and from school; hoodies are not permitted and will be confiscated. Shoes should be black leather, polishable and smart in appearance, not trainer-like. Some students returned to school understandably without all the necessary equipment

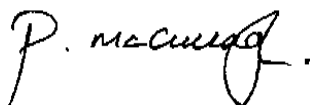
for learning. This is something else which can be checked by parents/carers and rectified over the Easter break if necessary.

I am sure that this half term has been a busy and rather stressful one for many of our families. Again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support that you have given your sons and the school this term. Online learning has been a massive learning curve for all involved and I have been extremely impressed with the way that your sons have responded. In a similar way, I have been equally impressed by the way that the teaching staff have delivered lessons remotely. It is time now for everyone to have a good break from the screens and have a rest over the coming weeks.

Sadly, many members of our community have been affected and will continue to be directly affected by the Coronavirus. Easter is often considered the greatest celebration in the Catholic Church because it is the completion of Holy week that ends with the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus was raised from the dead, and he conquered sin and death. It symbolises the opening of Heaven with the gift of eternal life to everyone which all of us can take strength from. I wish you all a happy and holy Easter.

***O God, who in Lent gives us the grace to imitate devoutly the Blessed Virgin Mary in contemplating the Passion of Christ, grant we pray, through her intercession, that we may cling more firmly each day to your Only Begotten Son and come at last to the fullness of his grace. Amen.***

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. McCullagh'.

P E McCullagh  
Headteacher