

# What's on in Year 11?

Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020



## Notices

Please find the latest updates for Year 11

I would like to begin this bulletin by saying that I hope this communication finds you all safe and well in these unprecedented times. The safety of the whole "Penrice Community" whether it be students, staff, parents, carers, or family remains number one priority in these challenging times and I hope you and your families are all well. As you are aware, Penrice remains closed to students, apart from our most vulnerable students or the students who have parents/carers who are keyworkers. In terms of establishing an idea of when school will reopen to students. We are, of course, following Government advice on when this will be safe to do so. We are not speculating on any length of time but simply following the guidance given to us. I would like to say a huge thank you to you all for your continued support of the school during this time, I have had communication with many of you and I think everyone appreciates how difficult this is for everyone and that we hope to return to "normal" as soon as possible.

**Student Wellbeing** – Top of our priorities is the safety and wellbeing of the students. We have reiterated the importance of the students "staying at home" and following Government advice. Similarly, we have encouraged that during school time that they establish good routines to enable them to make the most of their day. I have also regularly advocated that the students do some form of exercise and some form of mindfulness for the mental and physical benefits that we know this brings to everyone. I also encourage students who may have any concern, worry or any question that they make contact and ask questions via school email or Show My Homework comment box. Students can contact their form tutor, myself, Mrs Hooper or a member of staff they have a particular affinity with, to ask questions to put their minds at ease – they must just ask!

**Student Work** - As a school, we remain committed – and it is our duty - to provide the best possible learning opportunities and support as possible for the students in these difficult times. I sent out a letter this week explaining why we think it is important for the Y11 students to continue with structured learning. The work we are setting Year 11 now is about preparation for College, along with life skills and supporting mental health and not about preparation for exams, which unfortunately are no longer taking place.

**Communication** – Should you as parents/carers have anything at all you would like to discuss please let us know and staff will get back to you as soon as possible. Please email me [asutcliffe@penrice.org.uk](mailto:asutcliffe@penrice.org.uk) or I am more than happy to arrange a phone call with you at a time convenient. Please be aware that you may receive a phone call from myself or an email from Rebecca Kevill or Kirsten Hooper (Year 11 Pastoral Support) regarding your child not accessing/submitted work on Show My Homework. We fully understand the challenges you face however should you receive an email we are simply contacting you as a method of support to see if there is again anything we can do to help further.

**College Courses** – Another source of anxiety for some students is the college process. Lorraine Turner [lturner@penrice.org.uk](mailto:lturner@penrice.org.uk) leads in this area in school and can be contacted by email. We are aware that all the colleges are working hard to arrange over the phone interviews. The main message here is for the students is not to worry, the colleges are working through the backlog of interviews and will be contacting them shortly to discuss their course choices. The link below has information about all the colleges and their most recent information/update.

<https://www.penriceacademy.org/year-11-information/>

**Exam Grades** – In the next few dates there will be an update from Mr O'Brien about how the exam grades will work at Penrice. We feel that the process being proposed by the DfE is robust and fair, so that students achieve a grade reflective of their efforts and performance.

**Us Plus** – At this unusual time it is really important to look after the mental health and well-being of ourselves and our loved ones. Young people are finding the changed circumstances of our lifestyle particularly difficult and this may show itself in a range of behaviours at home:



It is important to acknowledge their fears and concerns but work positively to overcome them. Ways to help your young people at this time are:

- Keeping to a routine – this is where school-work is really important! Also getting up at the same time and eating at the same time impacts positively on mental health and well-being.
- Encourage physical activity – a workout / walk round the garden/ session on just dance etc.
- Limit access to social media and online gaming. Some is good lots can be damaging.
- Plan times to rest and relax time to do fun activities.
- Talk to and listen to each other – a simple 'Yes, I understand your feelings' can be really supporting at these uncertain times.

There is lots of information on our website including an A to Z of services and 'Your Way' link that can support and give advice about mental health and well-being and I send a twice weekly 'Us Plus' bulletin to all students giving lots of ideas, links and advice about staying mentally and physically well at this time. Finally, there is a team of Trauma Informed Schools staff at Penrice who are able to give 1-2-1 support to students who are struggling. This support, at this time, will take place over email but can be reassuring and effective for students. If you feel your child would benefit from this please email [ktaylor@penrice.org.uk](mailto:ktaylor@penrice.org.uk) for further information. Students can also self-refer using the same email.

Stay safe,

Kind Regards,

Mr Adrian Sutcliffe