

## Notices

Please find the latest updates for Year 8.

**General Update** – First of all I would like to start these notices 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. As you are aware, Penrice remains closed, apart from for 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, 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 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.

**Year 8 Options Process** – I am sure that many of you have been wondering how we are going to be facilitating the option process during this unusual time. It is true that the process will be different this year in regard to it taking place in the virtual environment. I would firstly like to reassure you that we have put together the very best resources and process to help both you and your children make the correct choices for the remainder of their time here at Penrice Academy. This will include videos from Mr Thomas one of our Assistant Principals, letters of recommendation for potential pathways, a Parent / Tutor phone call and an Options booklet detailing all of the subjects available to students. Below is a timetable containing the key dates for the coming few weeks of this process. If you have any questions at any time, please do not hesitate to contact either your child’s Tutor or myself via email [dpalmer@penrice.org.uk](mailto:dpalmer@penrice.org.uk).

Timeline of Events	
20/04/2020 – 24/04/2020	Video Introduction please click on the following link - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzezjQtqX-E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZzezjQtqX-E</a> Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April Communication sent out to all students including 'letters of recommendation'.
27/04/2020 – 01/05/2020	Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> April Options Booklet and Video Presentation sent out to parents. Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> April online booking system for Tutor calls to parents taking place on Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> May.
04/05/2020 – 08/05/2020	Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> May Tutors to call parents at pre-arranged time. Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> May Online Options Forms released via a Google Form.
11/05/2020 – 15/05/2020	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May Online Options Form deadline.

**Student Wellbeing** – Top of our priorities is the safety and wellbeing of the students. We have of course 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 for the mental and physical benefits that we know this brings to everyone. I appreciate many of the students are of course nervous, anxious or apprehensive what the loss of a prolonged period away from school will have on their education. Our aim is to minimize the impact of the loss time as much as possible and I encourage students that should they have any concern, worry or any question in particular that they just ask. Whether it be their form tutor, myself, a member of staff they have a particular affinity whomever they wish, whether it be to simply ask a question or to put their mind 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 reiterate again that should your child have any issues whether it be technical, unsure on some of the work they are being set, feeling under pressure, whatever it is, please ask! We are of course now four days into the summer term and staff have continued to set work for students on Show My Homework. By now you should have received a letter from Miss Gambier setting out the changes to the timetable for Year 8. You will also receive early this week a resource pack by post and below is the new timetable that your child should follow.

Year 7 & 8	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Learning 1	Physical Exercise and Reading				
Learning 2	Maths	MFL	History	Science	Maths
Learning 3	English	Science	Maths	English	Geography
Learning 4	History	Creative	Geography	MFL	Science

**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; [dpalmer@penrice.org.uk](mailto:dpalmer@penrice.org.uk) or I am happy to arrange a phone call with you at a time convenient. Please be aware that you may receive an email from either myself or Gemma Bentley (Year 8 Pastoral Support) regarding your child not accessing/submitting 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.

**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 Mrs Taylor sends 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 D Palmer

Head of Year 8