



Update 27th March 2020

Well, that brings to an end a very strange week for all concerned with the Woodham community. The vast majority of our staff and students have been at home, isolated from the outside world, trying to establish routine and order in this ever-changing environment. I would like to use this end of week update as a review of what's gone on this week and also begin to plan for the weeks ahead.

This week's thanks

- All of the parents and students who remained at home and did everything they could to stay safe
- All of the staff who have set work for students and responded to emails
- All of the staff who have come into school this week to help work with the children of key workers
- Mr Coates and Mrs Dickinson for relentlessly pursuing vouchers for our families eligible for free school meals. The government scheme will start in the next few weeks, but all of our families received supermarket vouchers this week to help during this difficult period.

What we've learnt this week

- Online learning has been slower than normal, including Doodle. Please be patient. It will work, it's just the fact that approximately 3 million secondary aged students are probably online at the same time, rising to nearly 9 million if you include primary.
- Teachers will do their very best to respond to student's questions, however, please remember that many are parents too and as a result, have their own children at home with them. They are not sat in front of their computers all of the time. If a question isn't answered immediately, please be patient.
- Teachers are learning and sharing resources with regards to online delivery. Please remember this is new / unique for us as well.
- OFQUAL announced yesterday that they will have a far clearer plan for year 11 grades at the end of next week. I updated you all on Wednesday with regards to what we know now, but as ever, as soon as I know anything else, I will add it to the website.
- Both Miss Kent (Thailand trip) and Mr. Coley (French trip) continue to be in regular contact with the travel companies. The current government travel 'ban' stands at 30 days, which doesn't cover either trip. If we cancel today, we would lose deposits and any monies paid, as there is no official reason not to travel in July. We will update both trips individually next week.

Next week

- More of the same. Staff will be setting work for all students, with year 10 receiving a far more personalised provision
- School will be open for a minority of students, including those of key workers without other childcare options
- Staffing in school will be being reduced even further, in line with overall government expectations. The phone may well not be answered, but a message facility is available. Please continue to use info@woodham.org.uk

To conclude

- Parents and students are very appreciative of everything we are doing as a school. I've put a few quotes below which were sent to me this week:

"I am sure you are getting bombarded and can I say massive respect and love to you all as I know it has not been easy"

“Thank you all so much for this last week, the information, the support, today especially. It’s been such a hard week for everyone. I would also like to say your posts today and this week on the website have been much appreciated regarding the year 11 pupils and support for front line parents. Wishing yourself all staff members and your families good health over this difficult time.”

“Reflecting on the current situation we all find ourselves in, I feel compelled more than ever, to say a huge thankyou to all the staff involved in my children's time at Woodham. I, as do other parents of Year 11 pupils, feel extremely sad that they are missing out on their final schooling weeks with you, and the highs and lows that comes with this. Maybe the pupils don’t feel as emotional but I am sure they feel the same sense of deflation and that this is all too soon!”

“Both my children attended Woodham, both having different experiences, some good, some not so good! Regardless of this, the quality of teaching has never been in question and I thank all involved for their input in providing a safe and encouraging school environment. School days can be some of our best and I am sure both my children will have memories of teachers at Woodham who have inspired and supported them.”

Some more ideas / thoughts / resources

BBC Bitesize <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>
BBC iplayer <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer>
History Channel <https://www.history.co.uk/>
Maths <http://www.mrbartonmaths.com/index.html>
PE / Health <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAxW1XT0iEJo0TYIRfn6rYQ>

I regularly show the staff at Woodham the quote below. Many of you have become teachers this week (not as easy as it looks is it!?), but this quote has always resonated with me for life in general. Be positive, be nice, be supportive and be human. Stay safe.

I have come to the frightening conclusion: I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child’s life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, a child humanised or dehumanised.

GINOTT, H. (1972) Teacher and Child

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