

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are now approaching the last week of this half term which feels both quick and slow – we are sure you know what we mean! We know that the current situation is extremely challenging for all but as a school we are comforted by the collective support our school community has shown. We want to thank parents, in particular, for their support over the past few months.

This week all lessons, for all students, have been accessed through MS Teams and the vast majority of students are really rising to the challenges they have been set. It has been a real moment of pride for the school when we look at the resilience our wonderful students have shown in this uncertain time. We can't wait to celebrate them on our return to school.

Information included in this letter is as follows:

1. Government announcement regarding schools.
2. Student welfare phone calls.
3. Chorlton Arts Festival.
4. Being Creative.

1. Government announcement regarding schools

We are sure that you saw the Prime Minister's announcement in the news that schools may begin to reopen for specific Year groups from 1st June, if the government thinks it's safe then. At this point they have prioritised primary pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. It was also announced that students in Year 10 should be offered 'some face-to-face support before the Summer holidays to supplement the remote education'. Again, this is dependent on whether the government thinks it is safe at this point.

From conversations, we are aware that parents may think that schools have prior knowledge of the announcements before they are made. Unfortunately we don't, we all hear them at the same time from the press conferences. In addition to this, schools do not have any more details when they are first announced and we have to wait for this information to come through from the Department for Education, which often can be delayed or comes through in stages. Once we have more details from them, and in conjunction with the Local Authority, we be able to create a detailed action plan that we'll share with you as soon as possible so you know what the arrangements are for Year 10 students.

It's a very unsettling time for us all, but rest assured that we're going to be doing everything we can to make sure we're ready to invite the students in if we are told it's safe in the coming weeks.

In terms of Years 7 to 9, at present the Department for Education has stated 'there are currently no plans to reopen secondary schools for other Year groups before the Summer holidays'. We know that this will be incredible disappointing for students, parents and staff. I certainly know that the teachers I have spoken to are missing seeing their students, and we absolutely understand that the morale, wellbeing and motivation for learning can be difficult.

We absolutely want to do the very best by our students and our teachers are continuing to develop more interactive content via MS Teams. This does take time as the system has been new to all staff, and I want to thank our teachers for incredible hard work they have put in to keep moving this forward over the past four weeks.

2. Student welfare phone calls

Over the past weeks you should have received regular phone calls from your child's Head of Year or a member of the Pastoral Team. The purpose of these calls is predominately to provide a fortnightly safe and well check and an opportunity for the student to speak to a member of staff. We understand that parents have lots of priorities at this time, so this is a chance to pass the phone over to your child so that the staff can check what support they need to try, keep them motivated and get them thinking about their own wellbeing.

3. Chorlton Arts Festival

Next week our focus, alongside the usual lessons students will receive, will be celebrating and hosting The Chorlton Arts Festival 2020 because we believe the show must go on!

The Chorlton Arts Festival was first staged in 2002. The idea was to create a festival 'by the community, for the community', to celebrate our diverse and creative Chorlton community.

Chorlton High School was at heart of this back in 2002 and every year since. In May, it stages the week-long Festival with a series of events to enable children from across Chorlton and South Manchester to embrace theatre, visual arts, music and dance.

This year was no different; plans were in place; shows were cast and rehearsals had started. However, as the last few months have unfolded it became clear that our own Blue Box Theatre would need to follow the 'West End' and remain dark for the month of May. But surely, the show must go on? So, the amazing staff and students at Chorlton High have responded with their usual creativity to overcome the challenges of this lockdown and stage our very first Virtual Chorlton Arts Festival.

Stages have been replaced with our own homes and gardens; mobile phones have relayed the performances and our technicians have worked hard to weave it all together. This year we celebrate Chorlton Arts Festival with an array of events from our ever popular Chorlton Young Musician, to an online Art Gallery sharing the work of our talented artists across the Year groups, to our award winning CHAT:SS club.

We hope that the community of Chorlton will join us in sharing of imaginative responses and in celebrating our creative community! This year we will #rockthelockdown

Timeline of events below - videos of these events will be released to our website, Twitter and Instagram. Please keep an eye out for these. We have also attached the CAF e flyer to this email

	Event
Monday 18th May @ 6pm	Take Flight- <i>A Drama Scripted Play</i>
Tuesday 19th May @ 6pm	Lockdown Art- <i>an online Art Gallery</i>
Wednesday 20th May @ 6pm	Chorlton Young Musician 2020
Thursday 21st May @ 6pm	CHAT:SS (Chorlton High Arts Team: Site Specific) <i>Quarantine</i>
Friday 22nd May @ 6pm	Composers and Choreographers

4. Being creative

As you know, creativity is a big part of Chorlton High and we wanted to share with our families information we have shared around how we can be creative during this time. Alongside our daily posts on our social media platforms, we also have created a couple of places on the website that encourage creativity and suggests ways to be creative. For a collection of our social media posts, please use the following link to access these ideas:

<https://www.chorltonhigh.manchester.sch.uk/chs-distance-learning/social-media-highlights-and-resources>

We also have some really interesting creative experiences available to read, watch, visit and do which can be found on our website using the following link: <https://www.chorltonhigh.manchester.sch.uk/chs-distance-learning/chs-distance-learning/chorlton-high-school-suggestions-on-ways-to-be-creative-at-home>

We are looking forward to seeing all the creative things our students and families get up to next week so please do share them using our email: Proud@chorltonhigh.org.uk.

We hope you and your family are safe and well,
Chorlton High School