

Year 9 Message – The New "Normal"

Things are starting to change as Lockdown is being eased and life is slowly returning to normal, or rather a "new normal".

Non-essential shops opened on the 15th of June. Have you been to any? I went to Marks & Spencer to pick up an order and I didn't have to queue to get in! It did feel a bit odd to be in a non-food shop. I queued for 30 minutes to get into Laura Ashley's closing down sale. I bought my wedding dress from a Laura Ashley shop in 1988, so I am sad they are going out of business. An increasing number of shops and businesses are in financial difficulty. Have you heard that Debenhams has closed in the Metro Centre?

As I live alone, apart from my two dogs and one cat, I have been allowed to form a social bubble with one of my sons and his fiancée. Before coronavirus having a nice home cooked meal, watching a film, going for a walk in Houghall Woods and playing Bananagrams with them would have been nice, but nothing too exciting. However, now it was really exciting! As I have said before, we now realise what is important in life and spending time with those we love is really important. If you have never heard of Bananagrams, I can recommend it. It's a bit like Scrabble as you have to make words from letter tiles, but you do it individually and the first person to use up all their tiles wins. Part of the game involves using banana related words such as "Split", "Peel" and "Bunch"!

From July 4th restaurants, cafes, pubs and hairdressers can open. I cannot wait to have my hair cut and dyed on July 11th, this is something else I took for granted.

Yesterday, June 24th, I was in school with some of Year 10. We were all following social distancing and hygiene rules. It was really nice to see staff and pupils. As I said to someone, "I didn't go into teaching to sit at a computer all day!"

Have you heard that in the last two weeks of term Years 7, 8 and 9 will be given a morning in school, between 8.20 and 12, in groups no bigger than 15? We can only offer one morning as we are keeping to 2m social distancing and strict hygiene rules and that obviously reduces how many people we can have in the building at any one time. Pupils will receive pastoral and practical guidance, such as how to access Teams, remote desktop, Office 365 and how to organise yourself at home. You will complete an academic review and receive advice; how has home learning been going, have you spent more time on some subjects than others and need to catch up on some? You will receive support for maths, English and science. The Year 10s I was with yesterday felt that the morning was really useful and it was good to see other pupils and teachers.

I believe a survey was sent to parents by email about your coming into school, so we know how many people to expect. I rang some parents where we don't have a parent's email address, but I couldn't get through to everyone. School buses will be running. A letter home will give final details.

Thinking of you all, and looking forward to seeing you!

Miss Owen