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Dear Parents and Carers,

4<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Like most of the population, I currently watch the news avidly each day and hope and pray for positive signs that the country is eventually emerging from the very worst of this awful pandemic. To anyone that has suffered a loss of a family member or a close friend recently please accept my sincere and heart-felt condolences. If you find yourself in such tragic circumstances, please contact the school so we do not make any unnecessary communications to you about school matters. We will then let staff know why work that has been set has not been completed. The last thing we would want to do is intrude in any way at such a sensitive time. Ultimately, the most important thing for us all is the wellbeing of our pupils, their families, our staff and our wider community.

In addition, of course, I pay close attention to the Government's position on when it will be safe for the reopening of schools to begin and how we will make the necessary changes to ensure the children get the best possible educational experience, albeit in a slightly different way perhaps to what we've all been used to.

Despite what many of you may have read in the newspapers yesterday, no return to school dates or plans have yet been given to our Service Director for Education. The DfE have assured all Local Authorities that they will be informed as soon as is possible. With this in mind, I would urge caution when reading the media. Boris Johnson announced last week that he hopes to make the Government's plans for a phased school reopening a little clearer for us all this week. This will be welcome news for many and I will write to you all again once this has happened.

In the meantime, I would like to reassure the Rackham community that we are planning for all eventualities. We are working hard to ensure that the physical and mental safety of Rackham pupils and staff remain our top priority both now and in the near and distant future.

In other news, I hope many of you are able to enjoy the VE day celebrations from home on Friday 8<sup>th</sup>. Keep your eyes peeled for a brilliant video about some local wartime history from Mrs. Deery towards the end of the week.

Mrs. Ward wrote to you all on Friday and explained the pupil survey which is included in this weeks planning. Please may I ask all parents to encourage their children to fill this in. They are astute consumers of home learning and we want to hear from them so we can keep optimising our provision. Pupil voice plays a crucial role at Rackham, even when we are following our usual curriculum routine in school. Our curious curriculum is more important for us now, than ever before.

I am delighted to be able to report that all Rackham classes enjoyed a live Zoom meeting with their classmates and teachers this week. Once again, I would like to thank all staff for their creativity, hard work, patience, bespoke care, sense of humour and professionalism at this time.

Please continue to take care and stay safe.

