



**LEIGHTON PARK**  
FOUNDED 1890

19<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope you and your families are safe and well during the ongoing COVID 19 lockdown period.

I write to you to update you ahead of Long Leave next week about our plans for teaching and learning in the second half of the Summer Term.

Firstly, your support, goodwill messages and tremendous thanks for that which we have been doing have been hugely appreciated and greatly encouraging. One parent wrote to me - in capital letters - to say that "no one is doing it as well as LP", which delighted us all. Likewise a student has said to me that online learning was "really great" and asked if, when we return, could they work from home every Monday?! (the answer is "No").

I would also like to thank you for your positive feedback and messages of support in our recent parent survey. I am pleased that the changes we have made, based on your feedback in our previous survey, have improved the educational experience for your daughters and sons.

Whilst there is still work to do, it is heartening that 95% of responses agreed or strongly agreed that you feel we are supporting your daughters and sons to make academic progress whilst at home. 94% of you agreed or strongly agreed that the lesson provision in Google Classrooms has been of excellent quality.

We are in no sense complacent. We have analysed your comments and suggestions carefully and will work to further support students who are finding the workload challenging or who are feeling socially isolated. With the increased engagement in classroom learning and co-curricular activities, we have noted a decline in engagement with the LP@Home activities. We will focus on quality over quantity and reduce this to a weekly communication following Long Leave, tasking staff to focus more on engagement and interaction through our academic and co-curricular programmes.

We have taken time to consider the ongoing advice from the Government about the possible return to school for senior school pupils. The Leadership team have carefully assessed the risks to pupils' learning, development, health and pastoral care. We have also looked at staff welfare, practicality and safety. We have concluded that for Years 7, 8, 9, 11 and 13 any return to school will not be possible. Similarly, no boarders will return this term.

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We also think it is unlikely that day students in Years 10 and 12 will return. The *raison d'être* behind the Government's guidance to state schools is that full learning, pastoral care and face-to-face contact needs to start to happen, all of which are in place in the 'LP With You' programme. Allowing Years 10 and 12 to return may also undermine the provision staff are able to offer for the other years in the Guided Distance Learning programme, which is imperative to keep at the levels of satisfaction you have reported to us. We have not ruled out, for example, an optional House or UCAS event for Years 10 and 12, but we will proceed carefully and not precipitously before settling on this. Safety and care will guide us. If we are able to make this happen, we will be in touch after Long Leave.

We will now be reinvigorating our curriculum plans for all Year groups. Look out for an altered Year 9 offering, implementation of the fantastic Year 11 and Year 13 'bridging programmes' and also some assessments to ensure that the progress your sons and daughters are making is properly monitored and recorded by us.

We believe this plan is the best way to keep excellent learning happening for everyone whilst keeping everyone safe. However, it is a source of sadness to me and all the staff that we cannot have time to be together on the Park.

We shall of course be planning carefully if there is any relaxation of the Government's guidance this term, as well as making sure we are ready for a full normal term starting in September with all the day and boarding students of all years back on the Park. It will be a joyous moment. In June we will be writing to all of next year's families with the detailed arrangements for the health, safety and protection measures that we will be putting into place especially for the Autumn Term.

I suspect that, like me, you have been thrilled at the activities and interactions that have persisted amongst our community in the first half of the term. Highlights for me so far have been the sports activities, the first ever online Monthly Meeting, the Fryer CAS portfolios programme and the podcast-style 'radio concert' of students' musical performances which was sent to local care homes. We have seen our Quaker values in action through so many student-led initiatives such as making NHS washbags and mask extenders, charity bike rides and donations of toys, food and hygiene parcels for local community charities. A fitting end to the first half of this term will be the School's participation this Thursday in a 5k challenge as part of the 'Run for Heroes' campaign.

Most of you will be aware of the Face Shields initiative that has amazingly now topped over 30,000 pieces made, sent to over 430 recipients, attracting the attention of local and national press. It has been quite astonishing to see this Partnership programme flourish and for us to work with other schools for the benefit of key workers in need.

It is truly wonderful to see how the community has pulled together in these times of adversity. This strong sense of community and our deep commitment to the forward-looking Quaker values are fundamental to our goal of forming young people of real character and confidence. The COVID 19 pandemic shines a light on how important such qualities are, enabling our students to be resilient and continue to thrive. It is no coincidence that these same qualities underpin our position as the top performing school in Berkshire for the academic progress of our Sixth Form leavers, one of only eight in England that have been in the top 100 schools for each of the last three years.

We will continue to rigorously monitor and assess the different aspects of our 'LP with You' programme and continue to welcome your feedback. Education is a partnership and I do not for a moment take for granted the impressive dedication and commitment our students have shown and your support for them as parents and guardians. Thank you.

Please do feel free to contact any members of the Leadership team if you have any questions or concerns. We will be only too pleased to hear from you and to help your family.

In friendship

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew LS Judd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Matthew LS Judd  
Head