

Parent Bulletin

15th January 2021



Robert
May's
School

A community seeking excellence for all

Thought for the week: Expressing Opinions

Word of the week: "Nuance" a subtle difference in meaning or opinion or attitude, from French and originally the Latin 'nubes', meaning cloud.

Book of the week: *Proud* compiled by Juno Dawson (available as an ebook on [ePlatform](#))

Dear Families,

- **Year 9 Options:** today we launch our Year 9 Options page on the school website. Please see Mr Wilson's announcement below which contains the link.
- **Key Worker/Vulnerable Facility:** the school has been running quietly and smoothly. We have had, on average, 53 students a day coming into the Key Worker/Vulnerable facility. They are minded by a team of staff who have volunteered to be on rota. The ground floor of Invictus building has been made into a Rapid Testing station, and we expect to be starting to conduct our first tests with consenting staff who are coming into school on rota today. Again, we are hugely grateful to the volunteers who have stepped forward to help with testing. Our approach to Lateral Flow testing (Rapid testing) is cautious, and this morning's news, suggesting that the regulator may have an issue with using this method for Mass testing of whole year groups before they return to school, is being studied carefully.
- **Southampton University C-19 testing:** RMS has been accepted as a participant in trials for a Southampton University saliva test. This has high levels of accuracy and can be done at home without the need for any swabs or invasive procedures. We look forward to sharing further information about this in the days ahead.
- **Support for families who need additional/alternative materials:** printed copies of lesson materials for students whose families have requested this are delivered by hand each week, and the school has lent out a number of laptops/chrome books to families where siblings were sharing one device. Please see the notice below about opportunities to receive wireless routers and other support for receiving remote/live streamed lessons, and please get in touch with us if you need help with wireless connections/wi-fi usage/devices etc.
- **Free School meals:** Eligible families for Free School meals whose children are working from home will be receiving back-dated vouchers from *Wonde*. This is the same method of supply as we used during the Christmas holiday. Please get in touch with the school by emailing info@rmays.com if you believe you are eligible but have not yet received your voucher(s). I confirm that we will be sending vouchers out to cover the February half-term holiday too.
- **Year 11 and GCSE Assessments:** It has been upsetting to read so many conflicting and misleading media reports about the current situation with GCSE assessments. We feel strongly that Year 11 students do not need speculation right now. At the time of writing, RMS is waiting for Ofqual to announce and release its consultation. Once we can see what Ofqual is planning, we can then make arrangements and communicate with Year 11 students and their families accordingly. It has been great to hear from teaching colleagues that Year 11 attendance and participation in their on-line learning sessions has been very high. The most recent information from Ofqual is in the CEOs' response to the Secretary of State, which you can find here: [Ofqual](#)

[chief's letter 13 Jan](#) in which reference is made to the possibility of consulting about using short, externally set tests as part of the assessment collection. We would warmly encourage all Parents/Carers to participate in the consultation when it comes out.

Your attention is drawn to a new vacancy for a Parent/Carer Trustee. Information is given below. Please consider joining the Trust Board and supporting the school with its continuing quest for excellence.

Have a peaceful and safe weekend,

Joanna C West
Headteacher

Key Worker/Vulnerable Child Facility

- We are proud to offer this facility again, in order to support the national effort and give our NHS, armed forces, police, food production, public broadcast media, social care and other essential workers the opportunity to continue to do their jobs. If you need to check the list, it is here: [Government Key Worker list](#)
 - The usual Covid-19 rules apply. If you think your child has any of the main Covid symptoms, please do not send them into the Key Worker/Vulnerable facility. An outbreak of infection would be disastrous for the facility and would prevent a number of people from being able to do their jobs, both in the community and in the school. Please help us and protect the facility by keeping children away if they are ill. [Government guidance: possible Covid-19 suspected](#)
 - **The following only applies to families of students who are using the Key Worker/Vulnerable facility:**

Please inform the school if your child is unable to attend school, in all circumstances, detailing the reason for the absence. It is essential that you notify us as a matter of urgency if your household needs to be isolating/your child is unable to come into the facility because they are isolating/being tested/are ill. Please also tell us if you have a positive case in your child /household because we will need to tell Public Health England and conduct contact tracing. Please use attendance@rmays.com for all communications about attendance. Remember to include the name of your child, their year group, the date and time of the first symptom they experienced (if you can) and please copy your child's Head of Year.
 - General information about what your child should prepare for in the facility and what they should expect is here: [Updated information for children of Key Workers and those who are Vulnerable](#)
 - We are actively encouraging the wearing of face coverings on the buses and in school. Please help us to keep the aerosol spread from people's breaths down by also encouraging your child to wear a face covering in school, provided that they are not exempt. We also have a small supply of visors and we are willing to give one to your child provided that they are not exempt and if, perhaps, they have a medically acknowledged sensory issue with wearing a face covering/mask.
 - The HUBL and Resourced Provision are both open with limited space for students who need this support each day. Please bear this in mind if you are considering using the facility.
 - We are expecting that this facility may remain open for those who need it during the February half-term holiday and will confirm this in good time before the break starts. Live streamed lessons will be suspended, and the facility will operate on a more informal basis with games, films, puzzles, plenty of outdoor activities, art/craft and cooking opportunities.
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YEAR 9 OPTIONS

We are pleased to announce that the Year 9 Options information is now available on the school website. [Year 9 Options Information](#)

You will find the options booklets, options form and an explanatory slide show on the website. In addition to these documents, we have also posted videos going through each section of the presentation.

You will receive an invitation to book an online 'Options Interview' with a senior member of staff in the coming weeks.

Mr Wilson

Remote learning: expectations and helpful links(repeated from last week)

- As you are now aware, with support from our wonderful Trustees, we have been able to roll out a fully interactive live streaming service for most lessons.
- On rare occasions, a member of staff will need to be away from live-streaming, and will need to set work solely on Google Classroom. This will be because:
 - they are engaged in pre-booked teacher-training or planned professional development,
 - they may have a medical appointment,
 - or they may be ill.
 - In addition to these reasons, please bear in mind that each day, a rota of teachers and Learning Support Assistants are on duty in the Key Worker and Vulnerable child facility. It might not always be possible for them to live stream because their focus is on the children who are sitting in front of them in school. Please respect this. All rota teams are on one-day a week duties, so we are expecting that any impact on live streaming will be proportionately minimal. Thank you.
- We have been sent information about how to access Google Classroom from an Xbox and PS4. We have shared this for those that might find it helpful. Click here for more information [Accessing Google Classroom through Xbox and PS4](#)
- BBC2 - programming to support the GCSE curriculum (with at least two hours of content each weekday). If you have younger children from 11th January CBBC will air a three hour block of primary school programming from 9.00am including BBC Live Lessons and BBC Bitesize Daily, as well as other educational programming such as Our School and Celebrity Supply Teacher and much loved titles such as Horrible Histories, Art Ninja and Operation Ouch.
- Sky TV now shows links in its on-screen breadcrumbs to school-age learning programmes and also links to BBC Bitesize.
- Invicta National Academy is a social enterprise which is offering their services completely free for school communities. They offer two hours of live and interactive teaching delivered by qualified teachers. Here is the link: [Invicta National Academy](#)
- Oak Academy has good online lesson provision, in case of need: <https://classroom.thenational.academy/subjects-by-key-stage>
- Our wish is that your child prioritises the lessons that are being set and live streamed by our teachers at their normal lesson times. The links above are for students who run out of work to do, or are keen to explore other resources in addition to their normal timetabled lessons.
- Hampshire Outdoor Centres have created a home activity pack to link to several national curriculum subjects and encourage students to keep active and be creative. Here is the link: [Home Activity Pack](#)

Laptops and wi-fi access: from the Government

With remote learning in full swing, some of our parents may not have sufficient internet access.

The government now has a scheme where schools can request mobile data increases to support students who:

- do not have fixed broadband at home;
- cannot afford additional data for their devices;
- are experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education.

Children with access to a mobile phone on one of the following networks might be able to benefit:

- Three;
- Smarty;
- Virgin Mobile;
- EE;
- Tesco Mobile;
- Sky Mobile;
- O2.

Other providers may join the scheme at a later stage. If increasing mobile data is not a suitable option for some children, the school can also request a 4G wireless router for the family.

If you are aware of parents/families who would benefit from increased internet access please can you ask them to contact the school by emailing their child's tutor or year head, or emailing info@rmays.com. Detailed government information regarding this can be found [here](#).

J West

ELSA SUPPORT (EMOTIONAL LITERACY SUPPORT)

Students can email the school's ELSA, Mrs J Tahourdin, to get help, support and guidance during the school day. This ELSA 'drop in' email has been created to help support students whilst the school is closed:

elsa@rmays.com.

LIBRARY NEWS

The [Library](#) is open online via the VLE for access to ebooks, audiobooks and the Library Catalogue. I am glad to see the ebooks are being well used already!

If your child is struggling to connect to ebooks I have created some instructions they can use [here](#) or they are welcome to email me.

All Library books borrowed after 7th September 2020 have now been renewed until 22nd February 2021.

If your children are struggling to concentrate on reading here are some tips to help them.

[Tips to get you Reading](#)

Student Book Groups

- New Year 7 Book Group - running online via google classroom and Teams on Tuesdays at 2.30pm - If your child wants to join in drop me an email. I had 7 students attend this week and it was lovely hearing about all the books they like to read.

- Booked (Years 8-11) - running online Mondays at 2.30pm.

If you or your child needs to get in touch with me they or you can email me at library@rmays.com

Many thanks,

Mrs Bennett
Library Manager

MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL LESSONS

Hampshire Music Service will be offering online instrumental lessons whilst we are in lockdown. Please click on the link and use the username and password below to access their information and guidance:

<http://hantsmusic.org.uk/students>

Username: hmsstudent
Password: learningzone

Drums lessons will not be taking place whilst in lockdown.

You will only be charged for the lessons which take place i.e. if you do not sign up for virtual lessons you will not be charged for this half term.

Rock and Pop Foundation are offering online guitar Zoom lessons. Students who are coming into school as part of the Key Worker facility will not be able to access Zoom whilst in school so guitar lessons will have to be arranged out of school time. For information about guitar lessons please contact Rock and Pop Foundation: [The Rock and Pop Foundation](#).

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Mrs N Hills
Head of Music

NON UNIFORM DAY - FRIDAY 11TH DECEMBER 2020 - UPDATE

I am pleased to confirm that we raised £1157, which will be shared equally between Crisis and the Salvation Army. Thank you for supporting this event, which in turn enables both charities to continue with their vital work supporting the most vulnerable members of our society.

Miss L Tozer

PE TEACHER CHALLENGE IS BACK

Dear Students / Parents / Carers / Teachers

TEACHER CHALLENGE IS BACK!!! Once again the PE department is attempting to get our community up out of their seats and beating us at a few challenges. This one is a master class in how to look silly on

video, one minute was tougher than I thought, especially as this was "Take Two" due to technical problems!!

We want you to see how many **HIGH KNEE SPRINT STEPS** you can do in one minute. I managed 198. Have a go to see if you can beat me.

[Mr Grigg's Challenge Video](#)

Record your results on the Google sheet below from Miss Kent (add them to the Mr Grigg tab).

[Teacher Challenge Record Sheet](#)

GOOD LUCK AND STAY SAFE

PE Department

PARENT TRUSTEE VACANCY JANUARY 2021

Robert May's School has a vacancy for a parent representative on the Board of Trustees and is looking for Parents/Carers who have the skills required to contribute to effective governance and the success of the academy.

To qualify you must currently have a child or children at the school.

We would specifically welcome nomination from parents with the following skills:

1. An ability to interpret data.
2. The confidence to contribute to board meetings from a supportive standpoint.
3. A passion for great quality education and/or experience of the education sector.
4. A positive outlook and capacity to commit to the responsibility and requirements of successful governance.

The Trust Board works together as a group, and meets at least **six** times per year. If you are thinking of standing as a trustee, remember that you will need to prepare for and attend these meetings, plus additional committee meetings during each term. There is an expectation within our code of conduct that each trustee will become a member of a committee and will take on additional responsibilities as a link trustee focussing on an aspect of school development. The time commitment should not be underestimated to fulfil the role well.

Trustees may be called upon for other tasks such as sitting on senior appointment panels or giving particular attention to a specific issue or policy. There is also an expectation that Trustees will attend training sessions in order to ensure that they are up to date on such things as school performance data, finance, special educational needs, Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment etc. A comprehensive induction programme is provided although all Trustees should be motivated and committed to developing themselves in the role by accessing the resources available.

Parent trustees are elected by the Parent body and serve for a term of four years, irrespective of how long their daughter or son remains at the School. Please note the Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All applicants will be subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

The Trustee Board would encourage you to take this opportunity to become closely involved in the organisation of the School and, if you would like to informally discuss the duties and commitments of a Trustee, please contact the Chair (anna.rigby@rmays.com). We will require the completed application form, [Parent Trustee Application Form](#), to be emailed to the clerk@rmays.com by Monday 25th January 2020.

RMS PTFA UPDATE

Uniform Service

The Online Uniform shop remains open, however, our parent volunteers will not be processing orders or be open for collections until further notice.

If you are a Key Worker and have an urgent requirement for school uniform, please email us at uniform@rmspta.co.uk with details. Our email will be monitored regularly during this period.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

RMS PTFA Uniform Service

Fundraising

Robert Mays PTFA is listed as a charity with Amazon Smile. [Amazon Smile - Robert May's School](#)

Please follow the link above, select us as your chosen charity, and then when you shop online through Amazon Smile, a commission donation will be made automatically. There is no cost to you



Thank you so much

Sian Taylor, PTFA Treasurer

Easyfundraising turns your everyday online shopping into FREE donations when you use easyfundraising to shop with over 3,600 retailers such as Amazon, eBay, John Lewis, Argos, NEXT and Booking.com.

Our retailers then make a small donation to say 'thank you' and easyfundraising gives those free funds to the cause.

Please register using this unique link – just search for 'Robert Mays PTA' and click 'support us' -

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/robertmayspta-1582874283-755391685/?invite=4225V1&referral-campaign=c2s>

Plus, once you've signed up and raised £5 in donations, easyfundraising will give us an extra £5 donation.

There's no catch or hidden charges and Robert May's PTFA will be really grateful for your donations.

SCIENCE RESOURCES

The ordering of Science revision resources resumed on Monday 11th January. Any orders placed on Scopay will be delivered on a week by week basis. An email will be sent to Parents/Carers upon receipt of the goods and the parent can then either request a home delivery or to confirm that their child will collect the items from school.

Please email info@rmays.com, marked for the attention of the Science Department, to request further information.

UNIVERSITY OF READING - PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH

Students from the University of Reading are looking for parents over the age of 18, with at least one child aged 1-18 living at home, to take part in their research. The study is looking at the link between family mealtimes and children's/teenagers' health outcomes, and how harmonious family mealtimes tend to be. By taking part, you will be contributing to knowledge on the subject which could help to inform further research and educate parents in future. This study is a dissertation project, supervised by an experienced researcher in the field of psychology. To take part, follow the link to [complete the questionnaire](#), which should take no more than 15 minutes.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

RMS PLANNED TERM DATES: 2020-2021 (please note, these may be subject to change, depending on Government advice)

Please do not attempt to come onto the school site without a previously arranged appointment. Uninvited adults on the school site will be turned away.

Spring Term 2021: Remote learning from home will follow these dates.

Further information about the Key Worker/Vulnerable facility opening times in the February half term will be issued as soon as we have clarification from the government.

Monday 4th January 2021 - CPD Day - School closed to students

Tuesday 5th January 2021 - First Day of Term: normal start time.

Half Term Break - 15th February 2021 - 19th February 2021

Monday 22nd February 2021 - CPD Day - School closed to students

Wednesday 31st March 2021 - Last Day of Term

Summer Term 2021:

Monday 19th April 2021 - First Day of Term

Half Term Break - 31st May 2021 - 4th June 2021

Friday 25th June 2021 - CPD Day - School closed to students

Friday 23rd July 2021 - Last Day of Term

As an academy, Robert May's School does not need to follow Hampshire term-time dates. However, we know that several of our students in each year have siblings in our neighbouring community feeder schools, and so to minimise disruption we have done our best to try and match the local arrangements.