



Senior Courier

24th April 2020

#REMOTELearning

Facing the Summer Term with Positivity



It's been a unique way to start the term but we have been impressed by the efforts of students, parents and staff who have adapted to the challenges faced with positivity.

We love seeing your home learning images. Please send yours in to feature in the next courier.

The Taunton School community has been coming together with kindness and generosity. See more on page 5.

More Inside

Headmasters' welcome

Five Ways to Wellbeing

Co-curricular matters

Daily Art Challenge

...and much more

Next Senior Courier: 8th May 2020



Welcome to the Summer Term

by Lee Glaser, Headmaster

I nearly fell off my chair when Matt Hancock recently announced his five pillar testing plan. I wondered if he had been looking at our website. Okay, I accept the five pillars of Islam were in place long before ours but we got there before Matt. If it helps us to lead safer lives I'm happy to lend our five pillars to the Health Secretary.

Our vision is based on five pillars and from time to time I am asked to consider which is the most important. It's almost impossible to answer but people will have a different opinion depending on their own view of education. Pastoral care is often cited as the most important and many are of the view that it should be a foundation stone rather than a pillar. After all, a young person who feels safe, happy and secure will learn better than one who does not feel cared for.

My own thinking changes. Not through a lack of decisiveness but because the pillars change in importance due to the cycle of school life and external factors. Right now, I am clear in my mind that Community is number one.

At a time of uncertainty and anxiety I have been heartened by the positivity, energy, generosity and sheer determination of our community.

The students have engaged readily with a new way of learning and are working as hard as ever. I am very proud of them.

The teachers have blown me away with their desire to provide a high standard of lessons, cocurricular activity and pastoral care. I loved the virtual choir practice, the virtual monologues and am looking forward to the virtual debate tomorrow. I enjoyed attending a tutorial and thanks to the Year 11 Bevan girls for allowing me to drop in.

Finally, parents have been fantastic. The many messages of support before term started were very much appreciated and I intend to collate them and share them with my colleagues. The ones since we started online lessons have been so positive and very gratefully received. And your generosity is astonishing. I can't thank you enough.

These are tough times. I have communicated with most of my colleagues and many have commented that we miss the noise and chaos of our daily lives with 550 teenagers. Our community is amazing and I can't wait until we are back together again. In the meantime I thank you all and please keep in touch.



The first week of remote teaching and learning

by Damian Henderson, Deputy Head Academic

I believe there is a military saying about no battle plan surviving first contact with the enemy, and it is true to say that, despite extensive planning over Easter, we faced many and varied challenges in the first few days of term. It has been a steep learning curve for everyone but the students have been wonderfully cheerful and co-operative and enjoying the novelty of their remote lessons. We have had some very helpful feedback from students, staff and the community, and we will act on this, plus the results of the wellbeing survey, as we continue to hone our systems for the rest of this half term. The goal is not so much to replicate the totality of normal school remotely, as to create a supremely enjoyable online version of it. Once a manageable workflow is established, I can see the

number of academic and co-curricular extension opportunities mushrooming. TS Teachers are fanatical about broadening their students' horizons and the virtual world offers tantalising possibilities for enrichment of all sorts - but this is all to come. For now, I must express my gratitude to everyone for rolling up their sleeves to make this work. A special mention must go to Years 11 and 13 AL students who have bought in to the idea of finishing learning their courses, even when exams are cancelled, and a super special mention to the Year 13 IB cohort and their teachers who have pivoted nimbly onto pre-university courses at short notice, in light of the abandonment of the May session. Mr Roberts writes with details of these courses.

Update from the Taunton School Foundation

Supporting each other and sharing memories

In 2022, we will celebrate our 175th anniversary and gather to celebrate with stories, photographs and shared memories about what it means to be part of Taunton School.

Founded in 1847, Taunton School has survived wars, pandemics, political unrest, financial uncertainty and the loss of life. We have adapted and flourished over the years; we've extended our community, our students, parents, teachers and friends come from all over the world and from just down the road. We have welcomed wealthy and poor children from every background and changed lives through education, regardless of financial means. We have created outstanding sportsmen and women, medical pioneers, war heroes, artists, academics, business entrepreneurs, achievers, dreamers and leaders of change. We will continue to do so.

The Foundation Team is working to engage our global community of Old Tauntonians, staff, parents and friends to create a collection of memories to remind us who we are, where we have come from and that we have a wonderful and exciting future to share together.

Our new "Memories Project" will be launched soon online. We are collecting photos and film clips- there's a questionnaire for fun! We are also asking members of our professional community to share their knowledge and experiences in a 3 minute film, to be shared with our students. Our business community, hard hit in many cases, will also be able to promote products and services via a new online platform that will be available on our website.

We are reaching out in many ways and asking people to share their time, stories, memories and collective support.



Already, the Taunton School Community has worked to support our NHS staff and care workers here in Taunton. We have received

outstanding financial support from parents in particular, who have donated their discounted fees to help those with greater financial need through our Hardship Fund and that generosity is hugely appreciated.

We remain heartened by the kindness and support of our community and will continue to work together throughout these difficult times and beyond, as we have always done.

To find out more about our Memories Project, to promote your business, donate to the Hardship Fund, or to get involved in any way, do get in touch: tscommunity@tauntonschool.co.uk

Thank you and we'll see you soon!

Nadine Latte and George Cockburn (the Foundation Team)





Safeguarding Matters

by Ed Burnett, Deputy Head Pastoral

Over the course of the Easter holidays we have tried to ensure that our remote school placed the wellbeing and the safeguarding of each

pupil at the heart of everything we do. This has followed four key principles:

1. AWARENESS

The government recently updated its safeguarding guidance because it is worried about the impact that remote learning and social distancing will have on young people. This ranges from direct issues such as on line vulnerability through to the indirect impact of screen time and isolation on mental health.

2. EMPOWERMENT

Our children will be impacted by this and they need to know how to respond by reaching out for support via the mechanisms they are used to such as their family, friends and the school. Alternatively they may prefer to reach in and find their own solutions through external agencies and organisations. A great example would be using the many excellent charities such as Young Minds.

3. LEADERSHIP

Not only must our young people look after themselves but they need to look after one another whether this is directly within their peer groups or more indirectly by keeping an eye out for younger people.

4. COMMUNITY

'We are in this together': this is a national rallying call and one we are seeing within our own Taunton School community. As a school we continue to work with other multi agencies to ensure that all young people and their families are at the heart of our decision making.



What is the school doing to ensure these four principles are followed?

The screenshot above is probably the best insight into the school's approach. We have recorded screencasts for each year group to talk through all the different things we are doing to support them and our community. The summary is below

1. The school is here for them - we may be remote but we will do everything we can to remain at the centre of their lives.
2. Every remote day starts with tutorial time so they can connect with their friends in the tutor group and with their tutor
3. We have not furloughed any key staff in our health Centre to ensure continuity of care. Emily Kane, Danni Ziabek (the sister and deputy sister), both mental health nurses (Maria and Sarah) and Frank, the school counsellor remain employed by the school
4. We continue to put together a wide co curricular and wellbeing programme (outlined by Hayley Mortimer and Ruth Coomber in this edition of the courier).

As ever, if there anything else we could and should be doing then please do get on touch: no matter what the circumstances we want to work with pupils and parents to ensure our children continue to thrive through these challenging times.



Five Ways to Wellbeing

by Ruth Coomber, Director of Student Progress

During this unusual time that we are living through, wellbeing is perhaps more vital than ever. We have created a dedicated firefly page

and TEAMS group for all staff and students to dip in to as and when they feel they need. On the firefly page we have focused on the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing'. This is the principle that wellbeing can be achieved in different ways and these five evidence-based actions can help you feel better. They are simple, free things to do and the aim is to prompt you to consider what you can do to improve your own wellbeing, rather than focus on the things you can't do in the current situation.

They are:

- **Connect with other people**
- **Be physically active**
- **Keep learning**
- **Give to others**
- **Take notice/attention to the present moment**

Coming soon will be yoga sessions with Mrs Wreford (Teacher and Head of Philosophy, Religion and Ethics) but for the time being there are daily additions of activities and suggestions of things to do to calm anxious thoughts, keep you busy or to have a focus on. If anyone has any good ideas then please email them in and I will share them on the various channels.

Take a look at the links below for some helpful suggestions to lift your spirits:

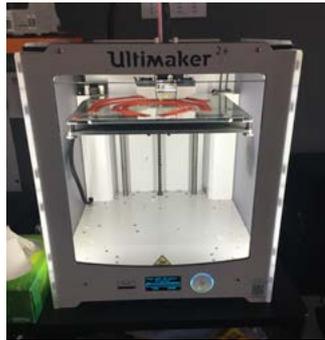
Firefly: <https://intranet.tauntonschool.co.uk/wellbeing>

TEAMS: <https://teams.microsoft.com/#/school/conversations/Wellbeing%20Centre?threadId=19:8dd782c85874460293f0b33bc5b0715b@thread.tacv2&ctx=channel>

Bringing the Community Together

3D Printing

Our Head of DT, Glyn Bough, has led an initiative to make use of our school 3D printers to make PPE Face Shields for the Community. More than 400 have been made and distributed to Musgrove Park Hospital, Southmead Hospital, plus a number of Surgeries, Pharmacies and Care Homes in our local area. Amazing work Mr Bough and team!



Grab 'n' Go Food Boxes

We are supplying approximately 60 nutritiously balanced food boxes to Musgrove Park Hospital daily. These are donated to front line workers and the feedback we have received has been overwhelming. This is headed up by our Head Chef, Lisa Richards plus a team of TS staff who are all volunteering their time to



come in and (safely distanced) pack the boxes every day. We would like to keep this going for as long as possible. If you feel you are able to make a small donation towards to

cost of supplying these boxes you can donate here: <https://bit.ly/TSCovidNHS>



The Firs Nursing Home

We have long supported one of our local nursing homes and our students, during regular term time, volunteer on a regular basis. Over the Easter break we were able to help their call to the community to supply donations of Easter Eggs to their residents. In total they received more than 80 which meant that the hard working staff as well as the residents were able to enjoy some Easter cheer. Thank you so much to everyone who donated.



Scrubs

We are delighted that a number of parents and students have been supporting 'Taunton Scrubbers'. A local group set up to make and supply PPE clothing to our local hospitals. If you are interested in getting involved then visit the Taunton Scrubbers Group on facebook for more information.



Daily Drawing Challenge

The Taunton Art Department have started a Daily Art Challenge. Each day a new task set for you to interpret and get creative! You can upload your artwork to [Twitter](#) using the hashtag #TSArtChallenge. It's a great way to connect people in these times and we have seen some fantastic entries so far. Keep them coming!



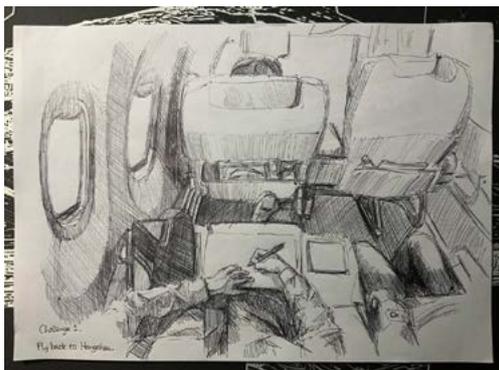
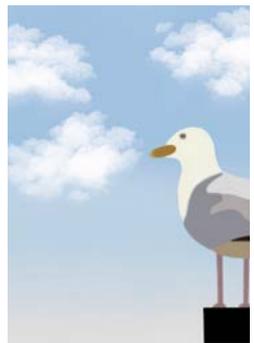
TAUNTON SCHOOL

TAUNTON SCHOOL ART DEPARTMENT
DAILY DRAWING CHALLENGE

FIND US ON TWITTER @TSARTDEPARTMENT

NEW CHALLENGE SET DAILY
TAG US IN YOUR ENTRIES

#TSARTCHALLENGE #TSDRAWINGCHALLENGE #TAUNTONSCHOOL





Co-Curricular

by Hayley Mortimer, Director of Co-Curricular

This week has seen the introduction of a number of activities to engage the students within the school community outside of their timetabled academic lessons or their house tutor groups. Information on the clubs on offer has been sent out to all students and parents, with links on how to access them whilst we work remotely.

Rest assured as ever, the school remains a busy and vibrant place co-curricularly with lots of opportunities to get involved in the many activities that we are still able to offer remotely. They are able to access weekly chapels and assemblies, as well as the many clubs and societies that we will continue to provide.

Debating

I am looking forward to watching the Live debate this evening, with the motion "This House believes political correctness does more harm than good", with Joe Day and Dan Travers proposing the motion and Hanna Wittek and Ed Cousins opposing the motion.

Drama

Drama started the week with TS Thespians running live on Mondays at 4.00pm. This term they are working on a virtual "Murder Mystery" type scenario, so the students are creating their own elements of the production, that we hope we will play Live at some point in the term. Information can be found on TEAMS under the Co-Curricular Activities TEAM or on firefly here <https://intranet.tauntonschool.co.uk/drama-2>

Enrichment

Enrichment continues to run after lessons on Tuesday and Thursday. Year 9 and 10 sessions are on Tuesday at 2.00pm, with Year 9 and Year 10 looking at Sex and Relationships Education and Year 12 on Thursday at 2.00pm focusing so far on the IB Extended Essay and apprenticeship opportunities and Year 13 have received support from Ms MacNair on the current university situation and a GAP Year talk looking at deferred entry for 2020-2021.

Music



This week I have been able to enjoy singing along with Mr Cracknell and both students and staff in our Community Choir, which was Live streamed on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 4.30pm on the Music Co-Curricular TEAM. The choir will be singing "You Are Not Alone" and the whole school has been invited to the TEAM and therefore sing together. I am not a singer of any considerable talent, but I can honestly say that I've really enjoyed joining in at the end of each day.

The usual ensembles of Wind Band, Dance Band and String Orchestra have also been continuing at the end of each day, with individual lessons starting remotely. This Thursday saw the first virtual tea-time concert, which will be repeated each week at 3.00pm. I was lovely to watch Issac, Kate, Daisy, Daisy, Matthew and Anthony although I was disappointed with my own personal contribution of tea and cake in comparison to the impressive cake made by Mrs Cracknell, I must do remember to do better next week!



Scholars Programme

It was lovely to see over 150 students logging in to the scholars programme (Live) at 10.00am on Saturday. The activities can be completed at any part of the week, but this live sessions gives the ability to discuss Live some of the topics under scrutiny within each of the sections of Academic, Art, Computer Science, Design Technology, Drama, Music and Sport. I very much enjoyed seeing the academic scholars have a fruitful discussion on Ben Jackson's topic of "Does everything happen for a Reason? A philosophical enquiry" as well as seeing Mrs Stamp and the Drama Scholars start planning their monologues to perform this term.

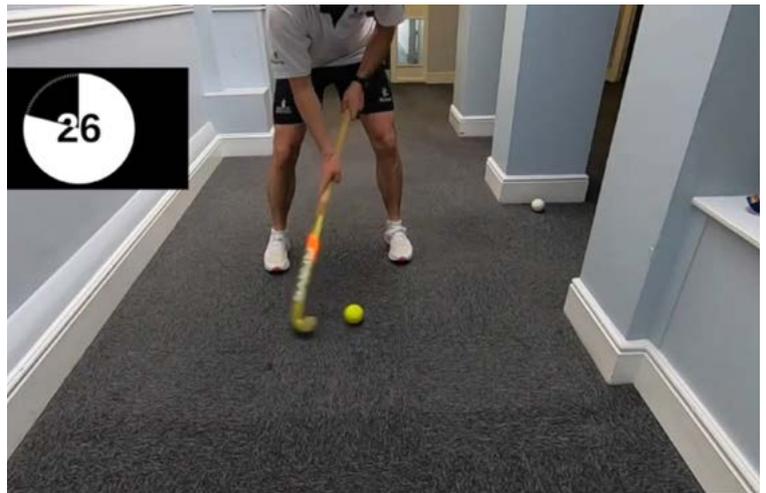


Co-Curricular

by Hayley Mortimer, Director of Co-Curricular

Sport

The Heads of Sport have uploaded a series of skill sessions and challenges on both firefly, TEAMS and on the [@tauntonsports](https://twitter.com/tauntonsports) Twitter page. The skills sessions have a range of levels, bronze, silver and gold, so are accessible to all levels of ability. If you complete the bronze level, challenge yourself to the silver level and so on. Cricket this week has seen skills sessions on batting, bowling, fielding all linked on firefly that can be done at home. Please do send in videos of your skills sessions to the relevant Head of Sport, so that they can give you some feedback and coaching points via TEAMS or email. You will also find the skills videos and live fitness sessions on the [TauntonSport](https://www.instagram.com/TauntonSport) Instagram page. This week we have seen Mr Foweraker challenging students to the total number of yard sticks in 30 seconds, Mr Sestaret challenging the accuracy of scrum half passing and Mr Carroll looking at body position. The idea is the students upload their videos back onto the Co-Curricular Teams page to create a leader board between year groups, teams as the term progresses.



Why not give this quiz a go and record your score.



The Ultimate Tennis Quiz!

How much do you know about tennis? Take a look at this ace quiz we've served up, just for you!

Let's do this!

1/20

PERFORMANCE PROGRAMME AND LIVE FITNESS SESSIONS

Mr Thompson has put together fitness sessions for each sport that you can complete at home. He will continue with 1:1 programmes for those students that need specific sport, so please do contact him if you would like some help or input from him. He is running live fitness sessions everyday – that you can watch live on firefly <https://intranet.tauntonschool.co.uk/fitness-for-fun/live-fitness> or watch retrospectively on Senior School Community page on TEAMS or on [TauntonSport](https://www.instagram.com/TauntonSport) Instagram.



Four Faces with a Global Outlook

by Adrian Roberts, Deputy Head Academic

Four faces with a Global Outlook as illustrated by our U6IB students

THE WHOLE FACE

At Taunton School there are currently 58 students completing The International Baccalaureate Diploma programme. The IBDP currently educates nearly 900 000 students in over 5000 schools and colleges in 158 countries across the world.

OUR MULTINATIONAL FACE

In the Upper Sixth there are currently 32 students from 10 different countries taking the IBDP programme.

OUR ACADEMIC FACE

'Facing' the disappointing (and discombobulating) prospect of the lack of final exams for our Upper Sixth students (and with no teacher input unlike with our GCSE and A level students) the teaching staff at Taunton School rallied together and have formulated a diverse and challenging range of pre-university course from Philosophy to Python Programming, from Beginners French to Forensic Psychology and from Marine Biology to Maths Calculus (full list displayed right).

OUR UNIVERSITY FACE

IBDP students have gone on to universities in 96 different counties in the world and though not stretching ourselves that far and wide our IB students will be off to become undergraduates in The UK, Germany, Holland, Spain, Amsterdam and The USA to name but a few.

COURSE NAME

Business/Economics
 International Relations/Politics
 Philosophy
 Theology
 Law
 Medicine
 Principles of Biochemistry
 Marine Biology
 Psychology
 History
 Geography
 Architecture
 3D Design and Coding
 Native Language Development (English)
 Native Language Development (Italian)
 Native Language Development (Spanish)
 French B
 German B
 Spanish B
 Programming (Python)
 Life Skills and GAP Preparation

HAVE A STORY?

Let the Courier teams know!

Email the Senior Courier:

senior.courier@tauntonschool.co.uk

Email the Prep Courier:

tpscourier@tauntonschool.co.uk

#ShareYourDay

Keep up with the latest news, stories and announcements from across the school through our social media accounts.

