



ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S SCHOOL



24 March 2020

Dear All,

I hope you are keeping safe and slowly adjusting to your new circumstances.

I have had quite a bit of contact with students and I want to confirm that, apart from any teachers who are unwell, we are all available to you to respond to queries that you may have. As I said in my message last week, we are committed to supporting you through this challenging time and we will continue to update you on relevant information about exam grades as things develop.

For those of you concerned about university places, you can see the current position at: <https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/after-you-apply/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-updates>. I am sure that there will be further updates to this.

It is important that everyone remains active and purposeful. There is no sense in the school supporting you in the preparation for exams that will no longer be taking place. We would, however, like to encourage you to include some academic work as part of your daily routines. This will be particularly important for those of you looking to study at university but I would argue that it has value for all of you. I would urge you to explore options to complete one (or potentially, a number of) MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses). You can search these through Unifrog or at a number of places like <https://www.futurelearn.com/> and as you can see from this article, in response to this crisis, more and more MOOCs have been made available without charge: <https://www.educationdive.com/news/mooc-providers-offer-some-free-course-access-amid-coronavirus-outbreak/574027/>.

If you are going to university, please also approach institutions to get advanced access to reading lists etc. I would encourage everyone to use the time for some reading. There are some interesting recommendations at: <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/mar/13/your-coronavirus-reading-list-reader-suggestions-to-bring-joy-in-difficult-times>. There are amazing resources for you to read and watch on Unifrog, not least an extraordinary a list of novels to read that correspond to all sorts of different academic disciplines: <https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/useful-stuff/list-of-novels-from-the-subjects-library>.

I am aware that some of you may be considering the possibility of sitting some school exams in the Autumn. If that is the case, it would clearly make sense to continue to work on your current programmes of study. Please contact your subject teachers directly if you need help with this.

I would urge you to use social media, Skype and other video conferencing tools to keep in touch with each other. Please try to look out for people beyond your immediate social group who are at risk of particularly acute feelings of loneliness at this difficult time.

Andover Road, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 6JP Tel: 01635 521255 Fax: 01635 576320 email: office@stbarts.co.uk Web: www.stbarts.co.uk
Headteacher: Ms J A Mortimore BA (Hons), MA

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Our School Counsellor, Elinor Harvey, will be available by email Monday-Wednesday- her email is eharvey@stbarts.co.uk. She will be able to provide online self help materials and signpost students to resources to help you manage difficult feelings. For her existing clients, she may be able to arrange a telephone/video call if you need to speak to her while school is off. This is not a crisis service. She will be available during working hours only on Monday-Wednesday and will try to respond to your email as soon as possible, but this may depend on her availability.

The school remains open only for the care of vulnerable students and children of key workers and it was pleasing to see them work so well today. Apart from this provision and any other agreed arrangement, the school is closed to all visitors. Please follow all the government guidance in terms of social distancing and isolation, so that we can all remain safe.

Wishing you all the very best. Keep safe and keep in touch.

Kind Regards,

Mr A Robbins
Head of Sixth Form