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Dear Parents/Guardians and boarders.

I hope you are all safe and well with your families. This has been such a strange time for all of us, with fast-shifting guidance from the government and an escalating rhetoric throughout the media, but as I sit and reflect on it now I realise how maturely and calmly all of our boarders have handled it. I am especially proud of the Year 11 and 13 boarders who have dealt with the uncertainty of being graded without exams with patience and understanding. I know that the academic staff are all waiting on guidance from Ofqual and the exam boards and will be in touch with students when they are clear about how everything is going to work.

Please keep your studies fresh in your mind, especially in the subjects you are continuing for A-level or at University – even a little revision is very powerful over the next few weeks until we know more.

All other year groups should be busy completing the work set on ClassCharts and I imagine that parents are enjoying the chance to sit and work with your children. I hope you are making the most of this time as family groups and are supporting each other to keep your spirits up and each other safe. The school is not the same without you all and we are all hoping that this period of social distancing is effective and we see you soon.

We are all in this together as a society and strict adherence to the rules may be challenging to some young people, but it will directly save lives in the long run. There are also many Sexey's parents who have direct roles in the fight against Covid-19 and I am sure you join me in wanting to express my personal thanks to them, including the frontline medical staff, support roles in the security services, key personnel in critical supply chains and all in the social care sector that protect our most vulnerable.

If both parents are critical workers and there is no way either can work from home, and students are too young to be home alone during the day, then we are still here to support you. Please do get in touch.

I wish you all the very best and hope that you all see the positives in this challenging time. All the family meals you can now share, the evenings together watching box sets or playing games and the direct support you can offer each other.

Stay safe,

Mr Kershaw

Activities round up

Mr Todd has asked that all boarders, including Years 11 and 13, complete a survey using the link below. It is to record the activities you have participated in this term and to ask you to suggest activities for the future.

As always, we want to ensure we are listening to your feedback as much as possible before we plan activities for the future.

Many thanks.

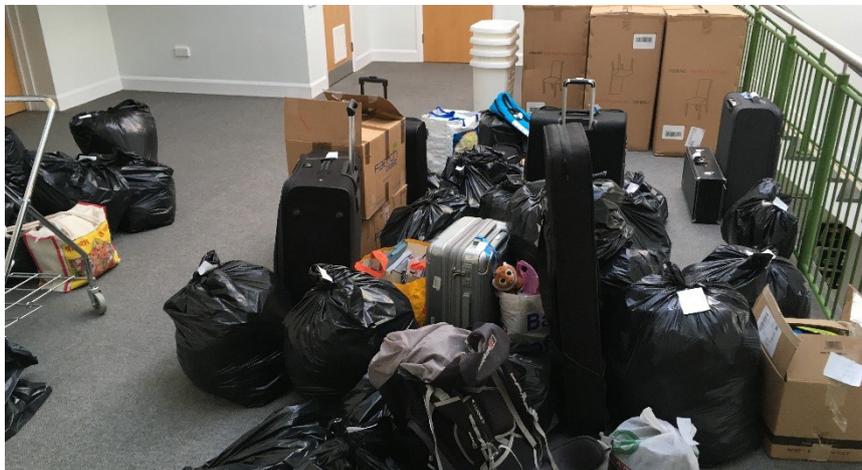
<https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/R3vEtvkg>

Boarders' belongings

At the end of term there is always a few students that leave some belongings behind. Usually most of this ends up neatly packed into the trunk room to keep it safe but there is always one or two who forget that the rooms get a good clean after they leave and so the cleaners have to sort their things out.

This time, because of the rapid escalation of the current situation, many students had to leave in a rush and this changed the 'few' to the 'many' – the photo below only shows the belongings from the upstairs rooms in Macmillan and does not include everyone that packed their belongings into their wardrobes!

We have carefully packed up everything and it will be labelled and stored safely in the trunk rooms in Coombe and Macmillan Houses ready for you to collect when things in the world have calmed down. We can then give the House a really good deep clean and perhaps even use this time to redecorate so it is looking great for your return.



Boarding during a pandemic: A boarder's point of view

By Alicia Mackenzie, Year 13

After school was shut on Friday, the last remaining boarders from Coombe House were all moved up to Macmillan, to become 'one big happy family' of 7 students and 12, yes, you read me correctly, 12 staff!! ...A different mix of students and staff trying to get along with each other and creating a sense of community, so that we would be comfortable in, despite the differing ages.

If you think this is a weird time, imagine being in house for 90+ students with only 7 of us. We were able to keep ourselves entertained with some extremely tense games of Pictionary and Uno.



Was there cheating coming from a couple members of staff... Yes there definitely was (Mr. Ward and Mr. Aldridge were the main culprits, in my view).

A walk around Alfred's Tower (*pictured*) was our last outing before the lockdown was put in place. We were struggling to keep ourselves entertained after going through the majority of the games and decided that car washing was the solution to the problem.

With everything happening, we are still trying to keep ourselves happy and healthy as we all should be doing, but with the amount of boarders decreasing from the 7 to the 3 of us, trying to get them out to go on a walk around the school is harder than expected. All they seem to want to do is stay in and hang out in the boy's computer room. Although... after a little persuasion and a promise of a haunted house, we will tell you where when we see you again, we were able to get them out and on walk AT LAST.

