

3 April 2020

## Check In and Update

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope you and your family are safe and healthy.

We're in an unprecedented emergency situation which is impacting the whole world. None of this is normal, and there really is no precedent to follow.

**Please remember you and your family come first.** Whole families are 'sheltering in place' under one roof, with normal routines disrupted and families juggling remote learning, working from home and family life. It's impossible to do all this, and lots of people are feeling stressed, overwhelmed and under pressure. Each family will be experiencing its own unique set of challenges.

We know that all this impacts on how much pupils and parents are able to engage with remote learning, keep up with deadlines, log in for live events, or respond to communications. We want you to know that we get this and are flexible and open to your situations. If you or your child are feeling overwhelmed, just do as much as you can. There is no one size fits all with this and every family will need to find the right way for them to engage with what we offer.

We aim to offer a helpful daily/weekly structure, appropriate to each age group, that is designed to have meaning, rhythm, and clear expectation. This can be an anchor when time is in free fall. The children do not have to complete every single task, just getting by is enough for now. Use activities if they suit you, don't if they don't suit, that is your choice. For younger children keep it simple and let them take it where they will. It is our aim to make the tasks easily understandable and achievable and not rely on your time to deliver them but rather curate and facilitate them. We recognise that there are also incredibly valuable learning opportunities in the everyday activities of a family and that to have time to do these things together can be a gift.

We also know that for parents it's incredibly stressful to have to keep up with multiple platforms and multiple streams of information, with some pieces coming through email, others through phone calls and texts, others through G Suite. With more than one child at home and more than one teacher per child, things can get out of hand very fast. At the moment we want you to focus on the basics, logging into G Suite, looking around to see how it works, testing the water with some of the online content, asking questions if you get stuck or feel confused, telling us about any concerns or problems and how we can make it easier for you.

We aim to provide a full curriculum, this may not duplicate the curriculum as it would have been delivered in School but a curriculum that is relevant and meaningful and can, at times, take advantage of the way we are having to teach whilst retaining what is at the core of our School, that

is the human interaction between people. We think there is opportunity in every situation and some learning can be accessed particularly well through the means we have at our disposal and we will look for these genuine opportunities.

In the older classes the pupils are very able to take responsibility for their own learning with guidance and tasks and expectations clearly laid out for them. A full timetable of lessons is being expected to be accessed and completed. Children at this age need to feel challenged and vital and we will provide this for them. We fully expect our Class 11 pupils to steam on and achieve their Level 2 of the NZ Certificate by the end of this year.

One of the core questions we are exploring is what we can do as a School to support the wellbeing of our children and families? We will try to check in personally with all of you over the coming weeks, whether by group chats or phone calls and make sure we hear each of your voices. We also encourage you to reach out to us if you or your child need any particular support, or if you want to make contact with us for any reason. We are still here, we are still your School.

We maintain our Safeguarding and Child Protection responsibilities during this time and a separate communication regarding this will be on its way to you. In the meantime, if your child needs any individual pastoral support you can speak with your Class Teacher or Miranda through the normal channels. Over the holidays Miranda can be found at [miranda.knight@cardiffsteiner.org.uk](mailto:miranda.knight@cardiffsteiner.org.uk). A Pastoral Care platform within G Suite will be appearing over Easter for you, with information, suggestions, pointers and activities laid out for perusal.

A reminder that our [G Suite Help page](#) has simple instructions on how to log in. Jenny is available to help with this throughout the holidays by emailing [gadmin@cardiffsteiner.org.uk](mailto:gadmin@cardiffsteiner.org.uk)

Moving to remote learning, especially for a Steiner School, is a huge task and it's one we've had to achieve as a School community in an extraordinarily short time. It is a steep learning curve for all - pupils, parents and teachers - and we want to make sure that what we offer is useful, manageable, and that we give you as much support as we can. We'll be sending out a parent and pupil survey shortly to capture your initial thoughts and feedback - what's working, what's not, and how we can improve.

Finally, we would like to find ways to rekindle community and relationships on the new platform - When we are kept apart from one another, for whatever reason, our need for human interaction increases. We are taking established relationships from a face to face setting and trying to reposition them within a culture of social distancing. How do we build in structures to keep students interacting with each other and with teachers. - Do we need more online video 'Meets'...teacher with pupils; teachers with parents; parents with parents; pupils with pupils? Are there other ways to connect in these times, both online and offline?

In these difficult times look after yourselves, and we look forward to the day when the School bell goes and you all line up in the school playground eager to enter through the doors once again.

Kind Regards for the Easter break.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anna Podesta and Miranda Knight'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anna Podesta and Miranda Knight  
for College the School Management Team