



Tomlinscote School

16th July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

The academic year is coming to an end and what a year it has been!

It started so well with numerous theatre visits, quizzes and competitions like SATRO, STEM activities and fabulous trips such as the Italy ski trip, Battlefields and exchange trips. The constant buzz of the school then came to an abrupt halt in March with the lockdown.

On behalf of all the staff at Tomlinscote, I would like to say a huge 'thank you' to all our parents and carers during the last few months. It has been a very challenging time for everyone but we really appreciate the hours of your own time, effort and dedication to ensure that Home Learning has been successful for your son or daughter. I admire all of you who have had to juggle your own job and being a teacher at home. The majority of students have worked extremely hard indeed, week after week and often sat at a desk for hours at a time. They have met daily deadlines, regularly checked in with their tutor and frequently produced work of a high standard. To do this for such an extended period of time is quite remarkable and this is reflected in the many congratulations letters and 1000s of 'Well Done' epostcards. However, this period of time has highlighted the importance of school for an individual in many different ways and I am really pleased to welcome everyone back in September. I suspect many students will be excited to get back to some sort of normality too and enjoy seeing all their friends together again.

Tomlinscote, like all schools, is going to look very different in September. Currently, we are carefully developing our plan to ensure that we can manage 1500 students as safely as possible and have an effective programme of education. **On Monday 24th August**, I will send all families a link to a video (via SIMS Intouch) with slides that outline the Tomlinscote plan for September. That will provide enough time for everyone before the term starts and allows for any changes in the national context.

In September, my teachers will need to assess where the gaps are with the student learning over the past few weeks. That is easier to do when the students are in front of you and the normal interactions are taking place. Subject leaders have undertaken an audit of student learning and a specific focus will be on Year 11 student catch-up with GCSE courses. In September, at the Year 11 Information Evening (probably a virtual evening!), I will outline the catch-up programme for the autumn term. However, I am very conscious that (current) Year 10 parents will wish to know how their son/daughter has progressed in the past few weeks. Therefore, I will be introducing an additional Parents' Progress Evening on 15th September 2020. It will be an online evening using a platform that allows individual subject meetings as normal. There will be another Year 11 progress evening after Christmas when the mock examinations have been completed. I am also aware that a couple of other year groups missed a Parents' Evening in the summer term and this will be taken into account in our 2020-2021 calendar of events.

We have said goodbye to our Year 11. This year group were such a superb group of students and I hope they are successful with GCSE grades in August. They missed out taking their examinations this year but we did guarantee that they would not miss their Prom. With the help of a few parents, a Prom will take place at some point and it will be a lovely reunion. We wish them the very best as they progress onto post-16 education or apprenticeships.

The annual cycle of students continues as we move into the 50th Anniversary of the school. I am pleased that we were heavily oversubscribed again this year and we welcome 300 new students from a number of different primary schools. Unfortunately, these students missed their Induction Day in July. Therefore, I have changed our plans and created a new Year 7 Induction Day on Wednesday 2nd September. They will experience having the school to themselves for a day and get to know our new procedures. We really look forward to seeing the new students and I hoped they enjoyed their tutor video that was sent to each individual.

The arrangements for the start of next term in September are below. Further details will follow regarding where to go on arrival.

Tuesday 1st September	Inset Day	
Wednesday 2nd September	Year 7 Induction Day	
Thursday 3rd September	Year 7	8.30
	Year 8	11.00
	Year 9	11.30
	Year 10	11.00
	Year 11	11.30

Our work within The Prospect Trust (TPT) has continued to develop and our partnership with The Sixth Form College Farnborough is going from strength to strength. Many of you have noticed that our 3G Football pitch is well underway and I hope to have an official opening in September. What a brilliant community facility it will be! Currently, there are further changes to the bottom floor of the Vocational Centre with a new reception, office space and a Drama Studio being constructed. We are also enclosing the outside stairwell so students can use it at all times and new security gates will be constructed at the front of the school. TPT has also agreed that we should have a £300,000 investment in our school IT infrastructure this summer and consequently our students will benefit enormously. We have also recently secured government funding of £87,000 to replace our heating infrastructure (boilers and pipework) in A Block and the Sports Hall. Tomlinscote is only one of 14 Surrey secondary schools to get this funding for 2020. Another exciting bit of news is that the period of public consultation has started regarding the joining of Frimley CofE to The Prospect Trust. This is great for Tomlinscote because we already have very close links and Frimley CofE is a key feeder to our school.

I hope you have enjoyed the Newsletters each week and a special thank you to all the parents who shared their child's successes throughout the year. Your input is very much appreciated and I would publicly like to thank Mrs Carpenter for producing fantastic Newsletters throughout the past few weeks. They are always so positive and kept spirits up. Every week there is something new and this week it is great to view the video "Tomlinscote Creates at Home" with inspiring input from students and staff. (<https://youtu.be/BidPpdtTQJl>). The Year 11 Art and Photography gallery was also brilliant!

(https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/e/2PACX-1vQ5kc4uhgld_rpbMLB9HHYgkkH-p4T6Gn-WD48tu5JVAZIVAT-ZFYfAHGy5HuRiBY_zOJCr4igAR00U/pub?start=false&loop=false&delayms=60000)

We introduced a special Tomlinscote Award (T5 Award) for Year 7 students and they finished off the award during the lockdown period. They needed to demonstrate our 5 school Values (Excellence, Perseverance, Character, Community and Progression). There were certain criteria to be met for each school Value and they all completed an extended project for the Progression element. These projects were absolutely brilliant and the students could really get their teeth into a subject that really interested them. Approximately 123 students managed to achieve the special award and will receive a certificate and a special school colour to go on their jumper in September. The rest of the year group were awarded certificates for each Value they managed to succeed in. The student examples to meet Character and Community were awe-inspiring and perfect for the situation we were all in.

Another new introduction was our school House system. I am pleased to announce that Rowling won the House trophy for 2019-2020. All members of Rowling will get a small prize in September and we are planning new events for next year. It has been a great start to bring the Tomlinscote community together in a different way.

On reflection, I am really proud of the improved focus on developing our careers programme at Tomlinscote. Thank you to all the parents who helped out with careers workshops and assemblies to students this year. It was particularly great to see some ex-students participate and we hope to get more alumni participating in next year's activities. Our programme is now high quality and consequently the school is very close to the 100% Gatsby Benchmarks for all categories. I would be surprised if many other schools in the country were at this level!

The end of the year is always a time of change. We would like to thank staff who are moving on for their contribution towards Tomlinscote and we wish them well. I am pleased to confirm we are currently fully staffed for September and welcome back several staff from their period of maternity leave. Miss Ellis and Mr Henry are now joint Heads of Year 11.

A number of people will be purchasing new uniform or stationery in August for the start of the academic year. The winter uniform is worn in September and girls are allowed to wear opaque tights or yellow socks with the kilts. Please ensure the kilt reaches the knee because some girls have grown a lot taller and their kilts are now too short for school. At Tomlinscote, we are very clear with this expectation and need your support to ensure it is enforced. Girls can wear black trousers with black socks if they wish to do so. The majority of students dress immaculately but I think it is important to be clear.

A number of students have unique hairstyles at the moment so I am going to highlight that all students need to meet our expectations in this area. Please ensure that boys' hair is blended in on all sides and is a minimum grade 2 – no shaved sides!

In terms of pencil case equipment, please ensure your child starts off with the right equipment and this includes a green and purple pen. Thank you for supporting us with these expectations because they will not be able to share or borrow resources from another person in September. Furthermore, there will not be any plastic disposable cups for water so all students will need their own water bottles. Can you please ensure your son/daughter has a water bottle for the new term?

A few key dates for the beginning of September:

14 th September	Year 8 Information Evening (video presentation) Year 9 Information Evening (video presentation)
15 th September	Year 10 Information Evening (video presentation) Year 11 Information Evening (video presentation)
16 th September	Year 7 Information Evening (video presentation)
17 th September	Year 11 Progress Evening – a virtual evening with appointments with staff online. 3.30pm – 7.00pm

Finally, thank you for your continued support and the many positive emails from parents that I have received in the past few months. I hope you feel that we have kept you informed of the constant educational changes and please look out for the video on 24th August 2020.

The summer term ends on Friday 17th July, at 12.00pm, and I wish you a very good summer holiday.

Yours sincerely

Mr R Major
Principal