

20 April 2020



— THE —  
**ELMGREEN**

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Headteacher

Dear Families

The first thing to say of course is welcome back, and I hope that you have had a good break. As I said to the staff, it certainly has been like no other and let's hope that there is not another like it. There has been a lot of uncertainty in the last few weeks, and it is definitely the case that there is much uncertainty about what is to come, but one thing I am absolutely sure of is that we are back at school today whether virtual or real and that it is great to be back. This is always a day I remember as I started at Elmgreen in the Summer term six years ago so always feel a little more excited, and nervous at the start of this term.

There has been so much that has happened over the holidays that I will try to summarise in this letter. The first thing is that we have now moved over to Google Classroom for Year 7 to Year 13. Mr Ryan has done an astonishing amount of work on this but we would not begin to imagine that the next week or so is going to pass without glitches. If your child or children are finding it difficult to interact with or access please can you contact [admin@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk](mailto:admin@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk). This new interface will allow much more communication and crucially the opportunity for students to submit work for marking and feedback.

We have also had much more clarity over the holidays over the allotting of grades for GCSE, BTECS and A-Levels this year. Again, Mr Ryan has contacted the relevant families. One thing that has been pleasing is that the Department for Education has reintroduced the Results Day with A-Levels on 13 August and GCSE on 20 August. With everything that has changed in the last six weeks I think it is important that this rite of passage has been retained.

The next issue I have been thinking about over the Easter break is the transition from Year 6 to 7, Year 9 to 10 and Year 11 to 12. My three Assistant Heads, Ms Moran, Mr Arnett and Ms West respectively will be organising those transition points of starting Elmgreen, choosing your options and starting our Sixth Form, in the next couple of weeks. In the coming weeks we will set out the process for how all of this will work. Even though we are in a peculiar position at the moment there is no reason why these processes cannot in fact be more effective than they have been in the past. Over the last few weeks I have become a big fan of the phrase, 'necessity is the mother of invention' and I am determined that every single student will have a personalised and successful transition process.

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The other thing that has become obvious in the last few weeks is that this pandemic is causing significant hardship to families. For those on Free School Meals then hopefully we have now resolved the issues caused by the launch of the Government website, but if not then again please email [admin@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk](mailto:admin@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk).

However, we are aware that it is not just those who are eligible for free School Meals who have been effected, and we are launching a number of initiatives in the next few weeks to ensure that our Elmgreen community is healthy, happy and learning. These have largely been done in conjunction with the Parent Promoters Foundation (PPF) who were the body who originally set up the school, and I must thank them publically for the work they are doing.

The first service they are offering is direct help if people are in specific difficulties. This information was shared widely on social media last week but I repeat it below in the hope that it may provide relief for some families.

*To Elmgreen Parents and Carers*

*Are you in need of urgent financial assistance? (e.g for food or electricity)?*

*The Parent Promoters Foundation (the School's parents & carers charity) may be able to help you through its hardship fund.*

*Email [PPF.hardship.fund@gmail.com](mailto:PPF.hardship.fund@gmail.com) or text 07517 692180.*

*We will treat your request in confidence and with respect.*

*\* \* This includes processing any personal data in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and our Privacy notice*

The PPF have also asked us to be the focus for a collection of materials which looks at the wellbeing of our families. Please read below and again email [admin@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk](mailto:admin@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk) if you wish to donate or if you are short of such materials.

*'During lockdown, some of you will have found yourselves with none or few games, stationary, or art materials at home while others of you may have 'next to new' games/materials that you have grown out of, or are not using. You can donate these art materials and games to The Elmgreen School by dropping these off at the counter in the main reception. Please only drop off donations if you are passing the School anyway on your regular walk/exercise.'*

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In the next week or so we will be looking at how we formalise fundraising for our most vulnerable groups. We are also looking at students' access to IT and computers. You may receive a call this week asking about that and we did do a survey on this just at the start of the lockdown process. Again, if this is a particular problem for you, or if you know of a family that does, again contact [admin@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk](mailto:admin@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk).

I am also pleased that we as a school are now going to be a centre for Lambeth food distribution over the coming weeks. I have volunteered to help and the link to the website is <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/how-you-can-help>. Anything that gets me out of the house (as my family can attest) is generally a good idea.

As I promised in the letter before half term each week we will have a series of recommendations from a subject. Today is the turn of Science so I am now handing over to our brand new Head of Science, Mr McPherson:

### ***Learning Focus – Science***

*As promised this week's focus is on Science and some good online links. The standard ones used for the setting of work at Elmgreen are:*

[www.tasomai.com](http://www.tasomai.com)

[www.senecalearning.com](http://www.senecalearning.com)

*Teachers are also monitoring work on show my homework*

*Both require student usernames and passwords. Students should have these, but if you do not have them, could you please contact Mr McPherson directly at [tmcphersons@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk](mailto:tmcphersons@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk) and he will ensure this is rectified.*

*I have also compiled this list of additional websites:*

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/kindle-dbs/entity/author/B00E0L0CBM> Amazon are giving away free eBook copies of bridging books which support any year 11 students who are planning to take sciences to a-level.

<http://www.docbrown.info> – Doc brown posts content directed at students from KS3 to KS5, there are quizzes, notes and some video links

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/levels/z4kw2hv> - BBC BitesizeKS3 lessons, in addition to their usual high quality revision resources there are also daily lessons being loaded, which are tipped to eventually include such tutors as Sir David Attenborough and Chris Packham among others!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zcq2j6f> - as with the KS3 resources, there are high quality resources on here for key stages 4 and 5 along with three daily lessons. By signing up and staying logged in you can track your progress as you go.

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<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/> - TWINKL has thousands of teacher produced resources that are designed for home learning and not just revision. They even have a SEND specific section with differentiated resources along with guidance for parents and accounts are now free!

<https://mathsmadeeasy.co.uk/gcse-science-revision/> - Mathsmadeeasy have a range of GCSE science resources available for free

<https://www.khanacademy.org/science> - Khan Academy are a not for profit offering engaging daily schedules for learners from reception to A-Level – resources are arranged in US school years but all content is relevant to students here and is of a high quality. This resource is useful if there is a topic you are struggling with and search for it on the Khan Academy site.

*I would like to say a warm virtual hello to all of our students and their families. I hope this letter finds you well and you are making the best you can of this strange and occasionally very challenging time. I am new to the school in the sense that I am the new Head of Science but also an old hand in that I actually did my first three years of teaching at Elmgreen some years ago now. I am excited to be back and keen to get to know all of our students and parents when school life has returned to normal but in the meantime, please direct any questions to me at [tmcpthersongs@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk](mailto:tmcpthersongs@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk).*

I am so pleased to welcome Mr McPherson back to the Elmgreen community and am so glad to welcome all families back after the Easter Break. I will post an assembly later this week but in the meantime please stay healthy and safe.

Yours faithfully



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