

SALTLEY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

5th October 2020

Dear Parents

I have been reflecting this weekend about the stresses that we are all facing. There have been many challenges to everyone's mental health as a result of this period, and whilst I found the initial months of lockdown very difficult, there was still discussion about returning to school for Easter or hope all would be sorted for September. I think these last few weeks have been hard, not just because of the workload, but because I cannot see an exit.

Normally we can see an exit. We start a school day, the last lesson or activity is an exit. We see an autumn shower is approaching, and know the weather front after it is the exit. We study for exams, the exam is the exit. We play a match the final whistle is the exit. We like exits. We like structure. We like conclusions. But this virus has created uncertainty, confusion, and anxiety.

We're now six months in. How can we get out?

Dr Aisham Ahmad at the University of Toronto reflected superbly on this very subject in a series of social media posts. Firstly, she states, six months in we feel like we're running out of steam, we're hitting the six-month wall, we want it to stop. Normally, we'd run from this feeling, but as this is a global issue, we can't run anywhere because everyone is going through the same challenges. So the next stage is the adaptation phase. We've all had to change the habits we have had on shopping, teaching and meeting with people, on how we play sport, perform music and deliver drama productions. But as the R number increases and the evenings get darker, we have to find ways of innovating again, and because of what we've all been through this innovation won't be our most creative period. In essence, our minds are emotionally tired and most of our creative energies have been spent on just trying to crack on without cracking up.

Our aim should be to meet obligations, be kind to our loved ones, have realistic goals, give ourselves mental health holidays by not fighting our feelings, and give ourselves the escape we need. I have found myself completely in awe of the way that pupils have reacted to the necessary changes in our academy, and to their over-riding resilience.

Last week I wrote to parents about the curriculum changes we are starting on Monday 12th October. In addition to this, the school will now be dismissing students at **2:30pm every day**. We will be running a late club until 3:15 every day, available to every student should they want it. Please speak to your House team to sign up for a space for your child. The early closure will allow us to run a full extra-curricular program including additional Year 11 lessons which will run between 2:30 and 4:30pm. Please see the after school timetable below.

The new timetable will allow 5 hours of lessons to be taught every day, but unfortunately will mean a shorter lunch period for all. I have been working with Public Health England over the last two weeks and the lunch restrictions that include a reduced lunch and no free playtime are restrictions we must follow to help control the virus and reduce the amount of cases. I am sure you will understand the need to make these changes as the safety of staff and students has to remain one of our top priorities.

Mr White
Acting Head of School

School Day from Monday 12th October *Late Club until 3:15 daily

	CURIE / ALHAZEN		CADBURY / TURING		FARAH / SHAKESPEARE
Reg	8:30 – 9:00	Reg	8:30 – 9:00	Reg	8:30 – 9:00
P1	9:00 – 10:00	P1	9:00 – 10:00	P1	9:00 – 10:00
P2	10:00 – 11:00	P2	10:00 – 11:00	P2	10:00 – 11:00
	LUNCH – 11:00 – 11:30	P3	11:00 – 12:00	P3	11:00 – 12:00
P3	11:30 – 12:30		LUNCH – 12:00 – 12:30	P4	12:00 – 13:00
P4	12:30 – 13:30	P4	12:30 – 13:30		LUNCH – 13:00 – 13:30
P5	13:30 – 14:30	P5	13:30 – 14:30	P5	13:30 – 14:30
14:30 - Line Up and Dismissal					

Year 11 After-School Sessions

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
PE		Art	Triple Science	
Child Development		Drama		
DT		Photography		