



5th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope my letter finds you and your family safe and well, in what is a strange and worrying time for us all. Therefore, to bring you some positive news and cheer, I present our Breda Bulletin, kindly compiled by my colleague Ms McMullan, which showcases and celebrates just some of the events and activities students at school were involved in before we were closed on the 20th March. As you will see from the articles and photographs, our school is a vibrant and bustling community of young people to be proud of, and we are! They're eager to achieve, to support others and work closely with their teachers who do their very best to provide as many opportunities as possible to help them develop their skills and engage in new learning experiences. Our Facebook page will also keep you up-to-date with what has been going on and the important information you may need to know during our closure <https://en-gb.facebook.com/Breda-Academy-1394574960867218/>

It is so important we keep our students engaged in learning, especially when there are a thousand other distractions around to stop them, and like me with my two teenagers, I am sure you are spending a lot of time and using up a lot of energy keeping your child/children focussed and pinned to the kitchen table to do their school work, while you have to do your work! I am grateful to you for your persistence, patience and support in doing so, because keeping your child/children on task will help to prevent 'gaps' in their learning and prepare them well for when they return to school. In the meantime, Teachers and Teaching assistants are working very hard to support all our students remotely by using google classrooms, shared resources and email. Information on how to access these resources can be found at our website <https://www.breda.academy/>. If your child/children are still encountering any login difficulties and/or technical issues please contact our IT technician jfisher902@c2kni.net for assistance.

The closure of schools in NI is unprecedented. However, it is out of our hands and therefore an opportunity to find, in some part, the 'silver lining' in this situation. It is a chance to spend quality time together as a family, learn something new, get fitter and focus on improving our health. I have set myself the challenge of completing 10,000 steps a day (and so far I have achieved this), to read more books and teach my family how to play chess.

It is so important that our young people, and you, stay active and connected for your physical and mental wellbeing, so please 'Take 5' and encourage everyone in your family to do so <https://www.aware-ni.org/how-we-can-help-you/take5>. While schools are closed I believe it may become a stressful period for many of our young people, so helping them to be 'Mindful' will play an important role in keeping them positive and up-beat and to find solutions for the challenges they may face in these difficult times, therefore I am attaching a useful link for guidance <http://mindfulnessni.org/>.

As Easter approaches, it is a time to reflect and it reminds us about sacrifice and hope for the future. With this in mind, I especially want to pay tribute and say thank you to our NHS workers and carers of all kinds who are certainly making sacrifices to keep us safe and healthy, and to all our other 'Key Workers' who are keeping our vital services going to ensure we can still get what we need. And, mostly importantly we need HOPE, an optimism that times will improve sooner rather than later, and school will be open again! I am grateful to our 'Key Worker' families in Breda who to date have made alternative arrangements for the supervision of their child/children, but please contact me if these arrangements cannot be sustained and I will try my very best to help secure a place at a local cluster school or indeed at Breda Academy, contact@breda.academy.

I know our school community is strong and resilient and that we will get through this difficult time together, by working closely to support each other. Once this is all over, I look forward to seeing and meeting you all again as soon as possible and welcoming back our students to work with them face to face – we miss them!

My thoughts are with you all and I wish you and your families the very best of health and hopefully one or two chocolate eggs at Easter!

Kind regards,

Mr Perry

Principal