



THE TCS Tribune

Achievement · Excellence · Integrity

Issue #11 - Autumn 2020



Dear valued Parents, Carers, and members of the community,

Welcome to the eleventh edition of the *TCS Tribune*. This is our termly newsletter dedicated to sharing the activities of the students and staff in our wonderful school with our wider community.

When last I wrote an introduction to the Tribune, we were coming to the end of the summer term. We may have had optimism concerning the virus: cases were dropping, life was slowly returning to normal. Now, on the other side of a second lockdown, we can reflect on the best bits of the summer, all we have achieved throughout the this strangest of Autumn terms, and a future that looks more optimistic as vaccines begin to get to those who need them. What a year the world has had!

The Autumn term has been fraught with difficulty. I have been sustained throughout this very challenging time by the many messages of support from parents and the community and the privilege of leading a school that has delivered a highest calibre of education even in the midst of a global pandemic.

During the Autumn, we have managed to deliver a full curriculum, with very few differences to usual from the perspective of our students. Staff have worked tirelessly to embed the Covid measures, teach incredible lessons and provide opportunities as close to usual as possible. For their part, the children have been co-operative and helpful, demonstrating maturity, understanding and a high degree of compliance with the measures. Finally, parents have been incredible in supporting the efforts of the school, sending messages of support and encouragement, and ensuring that they follow the guidance to minimise the risk to our school community. Walking around the school, as I frequently do, allows me to see the high-quality lessons, excellent attitudes and behaviour and hard work that are synonymous with the Testbourne name. The pandemic has brought challenges, but our staff and students have not been bowed by these, demonstrating courage throughout this situation.

This edition of the *Tribune*, much like the one in the summer, is a testimony to the resilience of staff and students. The fact that so much has been accomplished in such difficult circumstances is something we should all be proud of. If you are facing your own challenges or worries, we hope that the contents of the *Tribune* bring some temporary relief.

Thank you once again to all of you. Your support and kind comments have been bolstering in this very challenging period of school leadership.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school in January. In the meantime, I wish you and your families a Happy Christmas.

Best wishes,

Mr Jon Beck

Covid Control Measure at Testbourne

We have implemented many control measures to ensure the safety of students and staff since the wider opening in September.

We have new procedures throughout the school day to minimise the risks of spreading. We have a one-way system around the school site, with all external doors designated either 'entrance only' or 'exit only'. Our breaks are now staggered so only two year groups are out at any one time. Year groups are kept in 'bubbles' by keeping to their designated area at breaks and food is served from two outlets.

We have installed hand-sanitizer dispensers at each entrance and at strategic points around the school. In addition, there are four external hand washing troughs installed with soap and towel dispensers. We have employed two additional Site Assistants to clean high touch points throughout the school day. Each classroom is equipped with a cleaning kit and we also have 9 misting machines that can sanitise a whole room in a matter of minutes. We also have a good supply of PPE to use when needed.

In classrooms, we have created a safe learning space for both students and teachers.

1. Students line up outside if possible. If not, they generally enter the classroom immediately to avoid standing in corridors
2. Students clean desks at the end of each lesson using the anti-viral spray and tissues. They also clean desks at the beginning of the lessons in case the previous class missed a spot!
3. Students remain in their seating plan which is recorded electronically by teachers. Any seat moves or group work is also recorded by teachers so that we can contact trace students.
4. Teachers generally teach from the front and maintain a 2m distance. Where teachers do circulate, they maintain a 1m+ distance and do not speak to students face to face.
5. Any textbooks used are quarantined for 28 hours or more, and in many departments, each set of textbooks are used for just one year group.
6. Any resources used (such as science practical equipment) are cleaned or quarantined before another year group use them.
7. Teachers do not hand out equipment such as glue sticks, scissors, whiteboards or pens – students must bring their own from home. If a student forgets an item of equipment, they can purchase it from the shop in the Library in tutor time.
8. If staff photocopy worksheets, they can use gloves if they prefer this to repeated hand washing.
9. SEND staff have PPE such as visors to use when supporting students and also maintain a 1m+ distance and do not sit face-to-face.
10. If teachers collect books for marking, these are quarantined for 48 hours +.
11. Homework is generally set and marked electronically to avoid the chance of transmission.

Students and staff have been amazing for following all the control measures in place.

Year 11 Mocks

I am very proud of the way that all Year 11 students rose to the challenge in the recent mock exams. We must consider that they were unable to take Year 10 Mock, which means the students had no previous experience sitting in proper exams conditions. In addition, the students needed to follow the COVID-19 control measures: some exams were split into two sittings, several venues to keep the distances and remembering to wear masks on the way to the rooms. Not only the logistical challenge but also their preparation and their conduct during the two weeks was totally spot on.

The whole process was a valuable learning experience and the next steps are to ensure that they are working alongside their teachers to fill in those gaps in knowledge. Well done Year 11 students!

Mr Alderman - Head of Year 11



Year 7 Settling in

My transition to Testbourne 😊

Hello, my name is Molly-May,
and I have just started at Testbourne School
Although it has only been a few weeks I
already feel so settled, confident and happy.

Before starting at Testbourne, I was
concerned that it was not safe for me to go
back to school at this time but as soon as I
began, I felt reassured that everything was
going to be alright.

All the teachers here give us each a chance to
speak for ourselves and always take time to
listen; they have belief and trust in us all. I
look forward to the adventures and
challenges ahead at Testbourne
Community School.

2020 was certainly a different year for us all and a year to focus on finding solutions to change. Over the last few years, we have reshaped our transition process to ensure that our prospective students are knowledgeable, happy, and secure in their surroundings when start in September. This year we were faced with delivering these same goals but removing the opportunity for face-to-face meetings and familiarisation visits. The virtual world has taken on a whole new place in the modern home and as we could not bring the students to Testbourne, we strived to bring Testbourne to the students.

You can never tell how successful something has been until you return in September. It was an extremely proud moment for us all to see the new intake students recognising and interacting with their tutors and their tutor friends right from day one, despite having never formally met.

It is always a long term between starting in September and Christmas but it has been fantastic to share the term with students and to watch them settle and grow into Testbourne students. We have enjoyed many new experiences and challenges such as sharing the fun of dressing up and celebrating Halloween with our Active Mile.

As we approach the end of term, I would like to finish by just reiterating how proud I am of every Year 7 students for working hard over their first term and settling in well with us. I wish everyone a very relaxing and happy Christmas and a New Year.

Kind Regards,

Ms Jenkins

Remote Learning

We have continued to develop our home learning provision.

At the start of the first lockdown, we started to use the 'Working from Home' folders on SharePoint. We have refined their use so that any student should be able to easily find the work set for their class by their teacher on any date. This could be used by students not only those who are working from home but also for those who missed the school with any reason. Students could also use this for revision purpose.

We have worked hard to ensure that there are variety in the lessons, including online learning, PowerPoints, worksheets, and activities to complete in books.

In most lessons, the resources in 'Working from Home' folders closely mirror the in-school lessons. Teachers are adding their lesson resources or lessons that are pre-prepared such as taking from Oak National Academy website.

In some cases, however, the lesson has to be adapted for Home Learning. An example is Drama, where it is difficult to host a play at home!

Despite the challenges, we are continuing to develop the 'Working from Home' aspect of our curriculum. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any feedback.

Mrs Gray - Assistant Headteacher



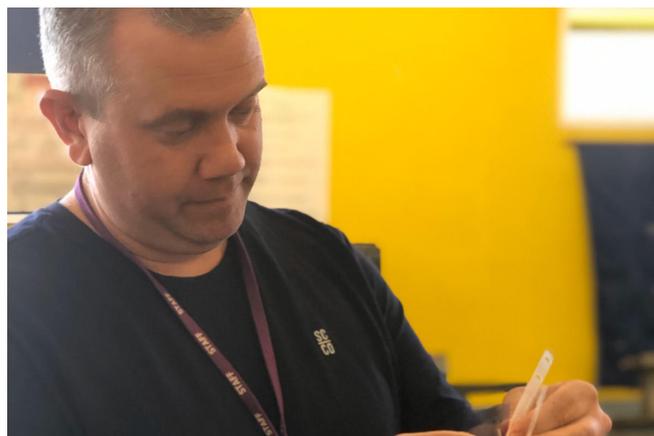
Basingstoke Gazette Education Award

Our Lead Practitioner in Maths, Mr Chris Roberts, has won an award in the Basingstoke [Gazette's](#) Education Awards for Community. This is to recognise Mr Roberts' work on making face shield for local community, in conjunction with Costello School, during the first lockdown.

The awards were set up in 2018 to recognise those talented individuals who play a part in learning across the borough.

It is a chance to honour some of the tremendous work that goes on in our schools and colleges at all levels, from those who volunteer their services right up to those who provide great leadership.

In 2019, our Head of Science and Associate Assistant Headteacher Dr Rich Wilson won in the awards, and we are delighted to have another prize winning teacher on our team!



Open Evening Live Event - Thursday 24th September 2020

Our strengths as a school are our positive relationships between staff and students, excellent behaviour, focus in lessons and good order during lessons and at breaks and lunches. It is our amazing staff and students that we showcase on Open Evenings, so it has been a challenge to host our Open Evening in 2020 as a virtual online event. We decided to host a **live** Open Evening event, broadcasted over the Internet, so parents and students could meet our wonderful staff and experience their passion, dedication and expertise for themselves.

In preparation, our website was furnished with 360° photos of our classrooms giving people the freedom to look around the rooms as the next best thing to standing in them. Staff members were filmed answering frequently asked questions, we had a school tour presented by our incredible Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Sudds, staff made and recorded virtual sample lessons, and there were interviews with Year 7 students and a talk by our Year 11 head boy and head girl.



On the night, we hosted a live presentation with our Headteacher and Heads of Departments along with an open Q&A so parents could interact with the presenters. Feedback from the event shows that this was very well received and that parents appreciated this opportunity to get to know us.

Thanks for a great evening. It really made a difference having some proper interaction from the staff. My son is now even more keen and is already identifying what subjects he wants to study and what instruments he wants to learn!

The evening was very well organised and all the staff were extremely professional in spite of the new virtual medium. You portrayed a friendly and dynamic environment. We were disappointed with the staffing issues in couple of subjects in the past. Hope in future we do not encounter similar issues. Thank you for an informative evening.

The event ran very smoothly, operating like a live TV production, especially as it is the first time that our teachers and technical staff have done anything like it.

The recordings and other materials are available on our website at www.testbourne.school/openevents.

Duke of Edinburgh Award

Expedition endeavours for Year 11 students

Many congratulations to 22 Year 11 students who completed their Duke of Edinburgh Award expedition in mid-October. Four teams of students walked across Hampshire countryside, carried camping equipment, set up camp at Pinsent Scout campsite near Winchester, and cooked giant pots of pasta and sauce! A campfire and some hide and seek provided evening entertainment although COVID restrictions meant no overnight camping. After sleeping in their own beds (or on their floor - for at least one student, which meant they could come closer to the camping experience!), they returned early on Sunday morning to cook breakfast and continue their expedition. Each group covered around 16-20 miles over the weekend, carrying full packs and navigating their own routes with map and compass. Weary students returned home on Sunday with aching feet and backs but with a great sense of achievement and some stories to tell. Well done to all the teams for a successful weekend.



Fantastic DofE success for Testbourne

Last year's DofE participants achieved the highest ever success rate in passing their Bronze Awards. 24 of the students who left Testbourne in the summer have achieved their Awards by completing all four sections – Volunteering, Physical, Skills and Expedition. This was a 71 % success rate, based on the total number who originally signed up. On average across the UK only 55% of those who start an Award complete it so this group of students who are now in Year 12 did really well.

Recruiting year 10s for the DofE group

More than 70 Year 10 students tuned in to an online information evening about the Duke of Edinburgh's Award on the 1st December. 46 students have submitted application forms to join the DofE group at Testbourne at the time of writing. During the information evening, they heard from DofE volunteer leaders about what is involved in the DofE Bronze Award programme, the practicalities of training sessions on Tuesday evenings, and about what is involved in the day walks and expeditions. We look forward to starting with the new year 10 group in January.

Report by Sue Nottingham, DofE Award Manager



Anti-bullying Week 2020

At Testbourne, we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. To support in this, we participated in Anti-Bullying Week. Anti-bullying week is organised by a group of charities dedicated to tackling bullying, called the Anti-Bullying Alliance.

This year, more than ever, we have witnessed the positive power that society can have when we come together to tackle a common challenge. That is why we are uniting against bullying.

For Testbourne, the Anti-bullying week was about celebrating the week in a fun and positive way. The week started off with personalised Anti-Bullying face masks and school computer desktops (insert desktop logo). An assembly at the start of the week highlighted how students could report bullying that they had witnessed. Our Year 7 Anti-Bullying Mentors also designed a postal box for students to write in any concerns.

We were able to change aspects of our curriculum activities in nearly every subject to promote anti-bullying week including a t-shirt competition by the DT department.

Our newly formed **Anti-Bullying Student Team** provided daily 'safe space' clinics for students in the library who need someone to talk to or just somewhere to be.

On the Friday, we celebrated with Odd Socks Day - the day sends an important message that we should all be allowed to be ourselves free from bullying and helps us celebrate Anti-Bullying Week. The students raised a whopping £300.60! Well Done Testbourne!

If you are interested in being part of our parent anti-bullying focus group, please email l.harper@testbourne.school for more information. I would also like to direct you to our website where you will find more information on our anti-bullying policies, team and procedures at Testbourne: [Here](#).



News from the PTFA

We held our AGM in September via Zoom. The highlight of the annual report was the fact that the PTFA have been able to donate over £12,000 to the school this year for much needed resources. Some of these have come in particularly handy during the pandemic

Thanks were extended to those leaving the committee for all of their help over the years and new committee members were welcomed. Penny Burt was voted in as Chair and Imogen Taylor as Treasurer.

If you would like to join the PTFA or are able to help us raise funds in any way, then please get in touch via ptfa@testbourne.school

Penny Burt

PTFA Chair



Library trolley for a 'click and collect' service

Remembrance Day 2020

On Wednesday 11th of November, Testbourne Community School held its Remembrance and Armistice Day assembly in order to commemorate those who had fallen in conflict.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made things more challenging this year, for sure, but we were determined that we still pay our respects and uphold our tradition as safely as we could.

A virtual assembly was broadcast to all Year groups during their tutor time.

Narrated by Dr Hall, this assembly explored the experiences of war through the eyes of loved ones as well as the soldiers on the front line. Personal letters from soldiers to their sweethearts were interwoven with the stories of Rudyard Kipling's son and Vera Brittain's fiancé, both Kipling and Brittain went on to write poems 'My Boy Jack', which was read by Henry Furze and 'Perhaps', read by Ffion Timmins.

Juliette Rivans sang the hauntingly beautiful 'No Need to Say Goodbye' before Dr Hall shared the story of his great-great uncle. Mrs Gray and Mrs Harper drew the assembly to a close with a reading of Brooke's 'The Soldier' and McCrae's 'In Flanders Field'.

The two-minute silence was held at 11 am with Years 7, 9 and 10 observing this in their classrooms as Year 8 and 11 (who were on their staggered break) stood silent outside. From the playground, as three Year 11 cadets lowered their standards, Edward Rarok played 'The Last Post' and Dr Hall read the famous lines from Binyon's 'For the Fallen'



*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

