



THE TCS Tribune

Achievement • Excellence • Integrity

Issue #12 - Spring 2021



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

Welcome to the twelfth 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.

It has been another strange term in a very strange year. When I wrote an introduction for the Christmas edition, I had no idea that we would be in another lockdown when term recommenced in January. And yet, once again we all retreated to our own homes and did our best to work remotely where this was possible.

We further developed our online provision for our students, including a full suite of live lessons, interactions, and independent remote work. The feedback from students and parents has been very positive and I was so pleased that families recognised the hard work of all staff at the school in providing for our students. This email from a parent captures the general sentiment:

Also, whilst I am emailing, I currently have a son in year 10 and I was wondering if you could pass on my thanks to Mr Beck and all the staff for the fantastic job they have been doing over the last year. The communication and interaction he has had with his teachers has been brilliant, the school has certainly taken one stress and worry away from me.

On return to school, we had the difficult logistical challenge of organising Covid testing for 930 children and around 100 staff. Each person needed to be tested on three occasions. We began our testing programme a week before schools opened so that we could minimise any further disruption to education. With the help of our families, an army of incredible volunteers, and many of our staff, we managed to test everyone by the Monday of the second week and all children were back at school within 2 days of schools reopening.

On return to school, it has been incredibly pleasing to see the children and staff again. I have had many conversations with students, and they have been, as always, charming to talk to. All of them have talked about how they prefer to be in school and that they missed their friends and their lessons. The behaviour and attitudes of the children have been at their usual standard, as if another interruption to their education had not happened. We are so fortunate to have fantastic students and incredibly supportive families as this means compliance with Covid protocols has been perfect and support from our community when we have needed it has been fundamental.



(continued)

One other significant aspect of our work this term has been learning who shall be joining us in September and welcoming them to our school community. We are oversubscribed once again, and welcome children from across the local area. We have sent personalised welcome letters and packs to parents and children, we have a welcome event this evening, where we can meet the families and find out a little about them, and we are planning tours and several transition activities as we progress through the summer term to ensure that our new students get the best possible start. The general feeling about the welcome pack and events is summarised by the email below:

“Thank you so much to Testbourne for welcoming my daughter to your school with this pack of information. She was impressed to see you have hosted a Bake-Off competition and she loved seeing photos of all the other activities. This was a great idea, and with the personalised letter from Mr Beck you sent last week, she already feels part of your school. With everything you have going on at the moment I wanted to say thank you for thinking of Year 6 students.”

This edition of the Tribune, like those before it, is a testimony to the resilience and hard work of staff and students and the support of our community. Although we face restrictions on extra-curricular activities, alongside the other Covid restrictions, we have not allowed these to dampen our ambition, efforts, and expectations for the children in our care.

Thank you once again to all of you. Your support and kind comments have been bolstering in this very challenging period of school leadership. Please do keep them coming in as they really do make a difference.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to school after Easter. We hope that the warmer weather and the progress with the vaccinations will mean that there is light at the end of the tunnel. In the meantime, I wish you and your families a Happy Easter.

Best wishes,

Rapid COVID-19 Testing On-Site in Secondary Schools

We commenced on-site Covid-19 testing on 8th January for our staff and students who were in attendance during the partial lockdown. It was a somewhat unusual start to term for some staff who suddenly found themselves being trained on registering, assisting and recording lateral flow device tests. The new uniform became mask, visor, apron and gloves!



From the start of the mass testing of students on the 3rd March to the 15th March 2021 we conducted 2,652 tests. This was a massive logistical undertaking in terms of resources and staffing the testing centre. Add this to the 990 tests that were conducted prior to this from January, gives a total of 3,642 tests for staff and students with, fortunately, no positive results.

This hugely successful programme would not have been possible without the help of parents, governors and staff. We feel hugely privileged to have so many supportive and committed members of our community who were willing to “roll up their sleeves” when needed. Their efforts enabled the mass return of students to school and minimised the risks of infection for the school population and wider community.

Thank you so much to those involved.

Mr. I. Wingfield – Business Manager

Remote Learning Summary

When I last wrote in the Tribune I spoke about our ‘Working from Home’ folders and using SharePoint to make sure work was easy to find if students were self-isolating. When the next lockdown closed the school in January, we swiftly moved to a mixture of live lessons, independent learning and recorded lessons. This was another challenge, but feedback from parents and students showed this was a valuable addition to our strategies for engaging students with online learning.



Highlights from the live lessons including the ‘Cookalong’ lessons from Food, pre-recorded Dance lessons, the PE activity diaries and the Science lessons in the kitchen.

As I write today, we are truly embracing blended learning, with the vast majority of students learning in school, but some working at home either joining in with live lessons hosted by their teacher or using the work in the ‘Working from Home’ folders on SharePoint. Teachers are finding new ways to connect with students, and although learning remotely can not replicate the interaction in the classroom, our staff are committed to getting the most out of students, even if they are unable to be in school because of Covid.

As usual, please contact your child’s teacher if you have any concerns about their work.

Mrs Gray - Assistant Headteacher

Department for Education Laptop Provision

During the latest lockdown we received a number of laptops and 4G Mobile Data dongles allocated to us by the Department for Education's Laptop Scheme. This enabled students that had no access to IT equipment at home to access our online learning platforms such as Microsoft 365. It ensured that they could take part in our virtual lessons and had access to other learning resources.



These laptops were integrated into our system to ensure they were appropriately configured and secured which resulted in them working straight out the box without having to do any configuration or software installation. The only requirement was to join to a wireless network and logging in using the student's school email address and password.

We also received several devices donated to us by members of the school community and the wider public, which we were very grateful to receive and meant we could issue devices to as many students as possible.

Thank You Testbourne Canteen Team!

A canteen is a predominate feature of any school as it is central when taking that all important break from learning and provides a chance to socialise with friends. It also provides the fuel that keeps you energised and working throughout the day and, not to mention, eating good food can boost your mood.



Despite the constant disruption caused by COVID-19, our canteen staff maintained their duties at the high and excellent standard that Testbourne is known for. They kept staff members and students of key-worker parents fed and satisfied during the lock down. They seamlessly accommodated for our new 'staggered' timetable and ensured all COVID hygiene procedures were carried out and fulfilled.

We would like to thank and recognise all our canteen staff who showed their tenacity and dedication throughout the pandemic. Thank you.



New Intake 2021 Welcome Packages

We were so pleased to meet our new students during the virtual New Intake Meetings on Thursday 25th March. The children talked to us about their likes and interests, their hopes and any questions they had around starting secondary school and any additional support they thought would be useful so that we can personalise the transition process. We have already met 157 of our 190 new students and are looking forward to meeting the rest over the coming weeks.

Feedback so far has been lovely. Please see some examples below:

"I've been very impressed with everything the school has done so far to welcome (name of child) - from the initial letter sent from the headmaster, the pack and the face to face meeting. The teacher we met – (name of teacher) - was engaged, friendly, kind and asked the right sort of questions to (name of child) who was quite nervous. He came away feeling more confident about starting. It's been an excellent introduction to the school. Thank you very much."

"Really lovely thing to do as I know many schools have not done this so definitely feels like we are getting a more personal entry to secondary school which is great."



We also designed and delivered 'Welcome Packs' to Year 6 students who we look forward to joining us in September. These packs gave out useful information, from timings of the day to school buses, to extra-curricular activities, clubs and sport. We also sent details on how to use Microsoft Office 365, as well as a little pin badge and pen as a gift!

Duke of Edinburgh Award

There were some dramatic incidents across the Testbourne site over the weekend of 27th and 28th March. Passers-by were surprised to see groaning casualties lying on the edge of the playing fields, whilst First Aiders bandaged them up or put them in the recovery position.

Fortunately, it was all just training, as the school was hosting a two day Outdoor First Aid course. Four of Testbourne's volunteer Duke of Edinburgh leaders were joined by DofE leaders from Cranbourne and Wyvern College, and some outdoor education leaders, on a course run by the Testbourne DofE Group and Worsley Training.



Dealing with casualties in awkward positions, those that started conscious and then became unconscious, and finding out how to bandage a wound with something impaled in it were just a few of the many scenarios that were dealt with! The Sports Hall also saw many resuscitations of 'Resusci Anne' manikins and a few bandaged heads and arms.

Mrs S. Nottingham

Year 11 Virtual Information Evening 2021

On Thursday 25th March, we held our virtual year 11 information evening via MS Teams Live. Given the extraordinary position that our year 11s are in, yet again, with GCSE examinations cancelled and centres required to submit grades based on a range of evidence and assessment, we felt it important to provide a forum in which to share some key updates, to signpost sources of support, and to enable parents and carers to ask questions.



Mrs MacAulay, Assistant Headteacher, presented a comprehensive update on centre assessed grades, including the range of evidence used, non-examined assessments and the right of appeal. It is important that students, parents and carers understand the robust process that is being employed in order to determine students' grades. The integrity of this process is of the utmost importance and will be scrutinised by exam boards. If you were unable to attend the virtual year 11 information evening, I would urge you to watch the recording of the event and read our summary of questions asked and answered during the evening, which can both be found on the link below.

Mrs Day, one of our specialist student counsellors shared key guidance regarding supporting students' mental health and wellbeing. In addition to talking through the in-school pastoral support provision, Mrs Day referred to websites and external agencies, so please do watch the presentation if you feel that your child would benefit from additional support or guidance.

Mr Alderman, Head of Year 11, then provided some community updates including notices regarding hoodies, yearbooks and end of year celebrations. At the time of presenting, we were awaiting guidance from the Department for Education on dates for year 11 compulsory attendance. We have now received this guidance so please do see the updated FAQ document on our website by following the link below.

Thank you to all parents who attended the event. Our records indicate that 100 families joined us on the evening. You can find a recording of the event along with an FAQ document summarising the questions asked and answered on our website at <http://go.testbourne.school/informationevening>.

Mrs E. Sudds

Head of School

Red Nose Day 2021

Students from Testbourne Community School raised near £1000 for Comic Relief on March 18th 2021!!

Thank you to all who donated as it does make a difference to the lives of millions of people across the UK and around the world.



Anti-bullying Ambassador Training

On Tuesday 30th March our Anti-Bullying Mentors (ABMs) took part in The Diana Award's Anti-Bullying Ambassador Training. This was an online, half-day training session delivered by an Anti-Bullying expert over the internet. We had setup a webcam facing our ABM's (who were sat at desks in our theatre hall) and projected the presenter so that they could all see and take part in the session. Also, other students who could not attend school that day were invited and joined from home using their own laptops and webcams.

The antibullying session covered:

A definition of bullying behaviour and the three types (including cyberbullying behaviour)

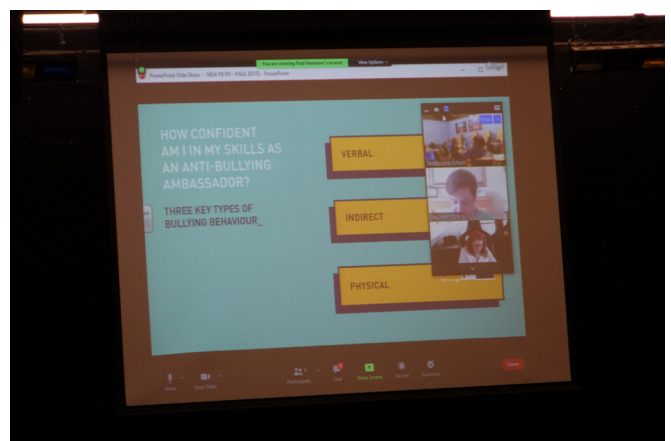
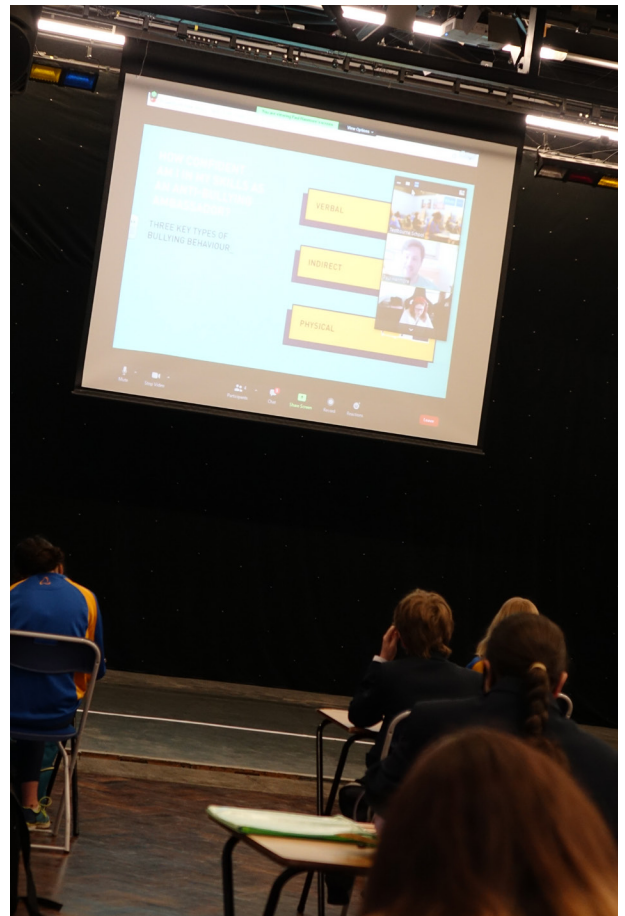
The importance of being an upstander and how to intervene safely.

How to identify bullying behaviour and when a peer may be experiencing bullying behaviour.

Supporting a peer who may be experiencing bullying behaviour.

Through the interactivity between speaker and students (with the use of webcams and microphones), and a series of engaging group activities and discussions, Testbourne Students are now equipped to restart our whole-school Anti-Bullying campaign and say No to Bullying!

Mrs L. Harper – Head of Year 9



PE Extra-Curricular Activities Return

I am delighted to announce that Sporting Extra-curricular activities will be restarting after the Easter holidays on the 19th April 2021. These will all be outdoor sports and will take place in year group bubbles. Due to pressures on staff time, including clubs for all year groups and the need to maintain year group bubbles, we have had to move to a 2-week extra-curricular timetable as shown below. Please note that it will be week 2 on our return.

For students attending extra-curricular clubs there is no need to sign up or speak to a teacher before the club. Students who are attending clubs will need to attend school in their PE kit and bring appropriate footwear. This is because there will not be enough changing facilities to house individual year group bubbles.

Mr J. Smith – Head of PE

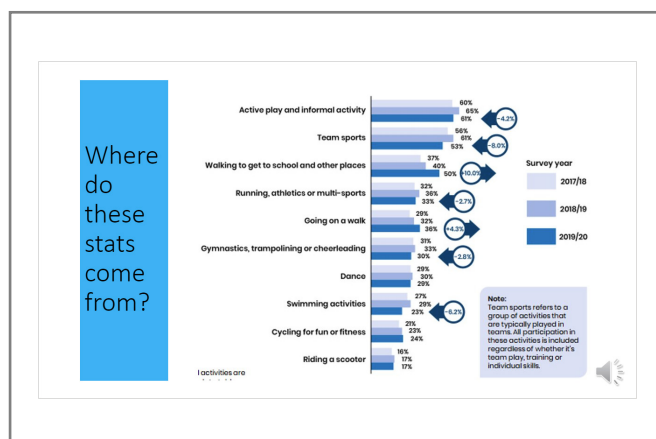


Sports England Active Lives Survey

Testbourne have been lucky enough to be asked by Sport England to take part in the Active Lives Survey 2021. The survey was developed with the aim to increase the number of people who are physically active and reduce the number of people who are physically inactive, in line with the UK Chief Medical Officers' (CMO) Physical Activity Guidelines.

By 'active' they mean "an individual achieves the recommended levels of at least 150 minutes of weekly moderate intensity physical activity. Inactive means they achieve less than 30 minutes." A third category, fairly active, is used for people who achieve 30-149 minutes per week. Sport England track these numbers at a population level through the Active Lives Survey. The survey was developed because they needed a robust and proportionate evaluation tool that could do likewise for the projects they fund.

As such, it was important to carry out the survey to help collect national data, as well as gain the possibility for funding from Sport England for the local area for sport related activities.



Testbourne's Rapid COVID-19 Test Operation



Testbourne Community School

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