

Since I last provided you with an update, we've had some very serious debates in school: cream or jam first being the most controversial!

It was lovely to be able to meet many year 12 parents in person this week and hear feedback on how things are going. With just three weeks remaining until the half term holiday, time is flying by, I can't believe we're in October already.

#### All – FOR ACTION – Parent forum

EMS has had a parent forum for a number of years which has taken a variety of forms, from small groups of parents meeting for a cuppa and a chat, to organised and structured online events for sharing information. It has always been run by parents for parents, with the school simply sharing information and sometimes offering a venue.

We do not currently have a parent who is interested in running a parent forum. If this is something you would like to do, please get in touch. There really is no pressure from us either way – over to you!

#### All – FOR INFORMATION and future ACTION – Absence from School

I mentioned previously about the need for students to complete and absence request form for planned absences. If your son or daughter is ill a form does not need to be completed but we do ask that either they or you email [enquiries@exeterms.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@exeterms.ac.uk) or phone 01392 429020 to let us know they will not be attending and whether or not they are well enough to join lessons online.

#### All – FOR INFORMATION – Accessing Lessons Remotely

We greatly appreciate the care students are taking to stay at home if they are a little under the weather. If students are isolating at home and need to join online lessons they can do so by:

- joining the class CHANNEL for Maths and Physics
- joining the class CHAT for Computer Science

Students should not assume that their teacher knows (or remembers) that they will be joining online. We find it works best if they contact the teacher directly, using Teams chat, to let them know and also ask a friend to look out for them in the lesson and prompt the teacher to activate the online meeting.

At the start of the lesson it can sometimes take a few minutes to get the meeting started – the technology isn't perfect – so students should not log-off if the lesson doesn't immediately start for them.

#### All – FOR INFORMATION – Extra-Curricular

We've had some feedback that a few students are finding the longer lunchbreak on a Monday and Wednesday difficult because they are not too sure of what to do with themselves. We will be encouraging students to look out for one another and to come up with activities which can be shared. If your son or daughter needs a little more support, we can arrange for them to meet with a member of our pastoral team whilst they adapt to the new environment. They can contact pastoral staff directly or ask their tutor to refer them.

There are already few extra-curricular activities which have begun at EMS, in addition to the activities available at Exeter College. We thought you might like to know a little more:

On Wednesday lunchtimes, The Write Angle's editing team meet to prepare editions of the student-run school newspaper. All students are welcome to contribute regularly or occasionally and to drop into this session for as long as suit them (biscuits are provided).

On Thursday lunchtimes a Claire joins students in Kovalevskaya to enjoy some crochet and knitting – both beginners and those with serious projects are most welcome.

Students have set up a Robot Wars competition. Teams have until the 10<sup>th</sup> of June to design and build their robots before battle commences. Students can sign up via Teams – they just need to search "Robot Wars" to find the relevant post.

The annual Starcraft tournament, run by Malcolm, has begun.

If your son or daughter has an idea for an activity in school, we'd love to support them. We've got chess sets, board games and table tennis facilities but are always open to other suggestions which students have a passion for. In the first instance they should contact Joe or could pitch their idea to student council.

#### All – FOR INFORMATION – Student Council

Student council is run and led by members of the student body with meetings once a half term. The first meeting of the council took place this week. Discussions included a review of induction week, EMS "merch" (an EMS beanie hats may become a thing this year), Christmas decorations (top priority) and requests for more furniture in the courtyard. They also considered the purpose of student council and their focus for the year.

We want to encourage students to take ownership of the environment they are studying in and the council have a budget to enable them to take action. I'm expecting spending plans to be high on the agenda next time!

#### FOR INFORMATION – UCAS parent event

We've added a date to your table of events on the parent page of our website. We will be holding an information event, online, outlining the UCAS process (University and Colleges Admissions Service) on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> April at 5pm.

#### Yr 13 – FOR INFORMATION – UCAS early entry

Our internal deadline for students making early-entry applications to university was this week and most have succeeded in submitting their applications on time. They should be congratulated – it can be very difficult to make decisions about courses and destinations so early in the year.

If your son or daughter is having a panic that they've made a mistake or are struggling to finish off their personal statement or make their final choice, there is still time to support them. Please encourage them to contact Liam with their concerns by Monday. If you need to get in touch on their behalf, you can email Liam directly: [liamcandle@exeterms.ac.uk](mailto:liamcandle@exeterms.ac.uk).