



St. Stephen's International School

"Where East meets West"

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Dear Parents,

As we head towards the end of a challenging Term 2, and a welcome holiday comes into focus, it is a time to reflect on the term past and also begin to look forward to next term, and next year.

Term 2 has been dominated by the Covid-19 crisis that we now find ourselves in. The consequences of the virus have been hard hitting and far reaching, and may be in evidence for some time to come. That our community has responded in such a positive and supportive fashion says a lot about its members; teachers who are working tremendously hard, putting in extra hours day after day in order to prepare online lessons, students, who are showing great patience and fortitude at such a difficult time, and parents who juggle their role at work with the role of supporting their children whilst they are at home; particularly those with very young children. All are playing their part in helping us get through this difficult period.

The online provision is expanding day by day. In addition to online lessons the school is currently offering online Art and Music competitions, writing competitions and online assemblies. This week has also seen inaugural online parent-teacher meetings throughout the Primary school, for which the feedback has been very positive. There is no doubt that the student experience is improving week by week as skills improve, feedback is acted upon, and the community settles into a routine.

I was lucky enough this morning to be part of a team from St. Stephen's delivering donations of masks Santiser gel and fruit to the medical staff at 3 hospitals in Bangkok, Ramathibodi Hospital, Chulalongkorn Hospital and Rajavithi Hospital. We were given a lovely welcome by the staff at each hospital, who were glad to receive the donations. It was a very nice feeling to think that in a small way St. Stephen's was helping the community cope with the current crisis.

Moving away from the subject of Covid-19 and looking forward to the next academic year.

Calendar

The outline school calendar for the academic year 2020-21 is now on the website, and the events calendar is being put together.

Staffing

Staffing needs are minimal for next year as we only have a very small number of teachers leaving, the vast majority choosing to stay with St. Stephens and help in its future development. This continuity is very good news for the school and the students.



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External examinations

The examinations for Years 11 – 13, and some year 10 students, have been cancelled in their normal form. Where possible, students will sit their examinations at another time, but for others grades will now be awarded according to evidence of ability, provided by the school and students. This evidence will then be moderated by the examination board. A grade will then be awarded and a certificate issued, just as normal.

We do not envisage any student being disadvantaged by this method, and the grades awarded will have the same currency as if the student had sat their examinations in the normal fashion. In other words, the grades will be recognised and accepted by schools, colleges and universities around the world.

Therefore, it is important that the students concerned continue to maintain the very high standards that we have come to expect from them.

Finally, we are waiting for news regarding the re-opening of the school, and hoping that this date will not be too far away. In the mean-time I wish you all a safe and relaxing holiday with your family. It is a chance for us all to reflect on the situation, and also refresh for the future. The students will have some work to do over the holidays, but not be overloaded, and there are some optional challenges, as well, which they might like to attempt.

Please be aware that teaching staff are on holiday, and whilst they will be checking messages, their replies to any emails may not be as immediate as during the term time.

With my very best wishes to you and your families.

John Rolfe
Principal