



Bishopstrow College Newsletter - March 2021

Greetings from the Principal

Over the past 12 months, the focus of our regular newsletters and other updates to agents, guardians, parents and destination schools has understandably been COVID-19. I would like to break from 'tradition' and start this newsletter with an update on the progress that Bishopstrow students have made in securing entry to destination boarding schools.

Our whole focus at Bishopstrow is to help international students prepare for entry to mainstream boarding schools. This focus has continued over the first half of the current academic year (during Terms 1 and 2), albeit with some changes. For example, boarding schools have adapted their admissions process, relying on online rather than face-to-face interviews. We too have reverted to offering practice interviews online, so that students are familiar with having an admissions discussion through a different forum.

Whilst plans beyond Bishopstrow have been disrupted for some of our students due to the pandemic, we are delighted to confirm that students enrolled on our Junior College Programme have secured entry to a number of leading prep schools, including Brambletye, Millfield Prep School and Sunninghill Prep School. Meanwhile, Middle College and Senior College students have secured entry to Bedford School, Bournemouth Collegiate School, Concord College, Lancing College, Reddam House, The Leys School, Uppingham and Worth School. We congratulate them all on their achievements.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, we are pleased to share an update on activities and events during Term 2, new Teaching Partnerships and availability for this summer. Please continue reading for further details!

With my best wishes for a very happy Easter.

Stuart Nicholson

Principal



Recap on Term Dates

A quick reminder that Bishopstrow operates an innovative four-term academic year, with no half terms or exeat weekends. Students can enrol in September, January, March and June, with a fifth start date in July in the middle of Term 4. The College's 'Term 3' commenced on Monday 29 March and continues until Friday 11 June. After a short break, Term 4 commences on Monday 21 June and continues until Friday 27 June. During Term 4, students can enrol for the full 10 weeks or for the 5 week Academic Summer Programme, commencing on 21 June and 25 July.

New Teaching Partnerships

We are delighted to confirm that in recent weeks, the College has established Teaching Partnerships with Knighton House School (www.knightonhouse.co.uk) and King's Ely School (www.kingsely.org). Under these Teaching Partnerships, international students with a confirmed offer of a place at a partner school can attend a pre-session programme at Bishopstrow, where the partner school issues the CAS and Child Student visa, covering the period of study at Bishopstrow. In a typical year, a number of international students will enrol at Bishopstrow in Terms 2, 3 and 4, where the CAS and Child Student visa has been issued under a Teaching Partnership. We expect this to be the same this year and look forward to working with our partner schools to ensure that their incoming students are fully prepared for entry in September. For a full list of our partner schools, please visit: www.bishopstrow.com/partner-schools/

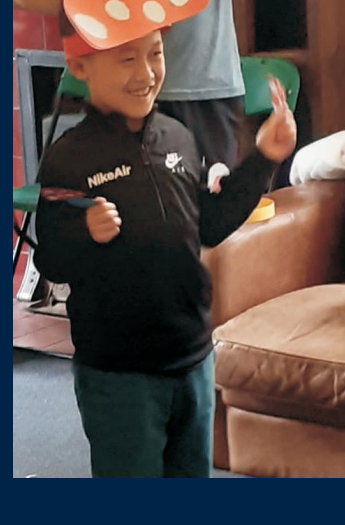
End of Term 2 Awards

We were delighted to celebrate the myriad achievements of our students during the End of Term 2 Graduation. Awards were presented for Sports, Boarder of the Term and the Maths Challenge. Congratulations to all winners!



Creative Arts Update

Alongside their focus on English, other academic subjects and sports, all students have the opportunity to participate in the creative arts. During Term 2, Middle College students were busy in their art classes producing some interesting (and creative) self-portraits! Elsewhere and as part of our weekend programme, students enjoyed performing an abridged version of Alice in Wonderland. We were delighted that all of those students on campus were involved in the performance.



Weekend Programme

The College is situated in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. During Term 2, we again made the most of the fantastic countryside on our doorstep and the emerging Spring sunshine, with a number of weekend walks, including Middle and Battlesbury Hills, both situated close to the College and a walk from Corton to Tytherington, a little further afield, but still within the county of Wiltshire.



New Registrar at Bishopstrow

We are delighted to confirm that Amanda Neill will shortly be joining Bishopstrow to take on the role of Registrar. Amanda joins us from Ardingly College, where she spent 8 years in various roles, mostly recently Deputy Registrar. Amanda can be contacted at enquiries@bishopstrow.com from 5 April.



Availability for Term 4 and Academic Summer Programmes (commencing 21 June)

We recognise that in light of the ongoing pandemic, there continues to be a considerable amount of uncertainty about study abroad, with parents understandably concerned about COVID-19 in the UK, flight restrictions and quarantine arrangements.

In accordance with the Government's roadmap for leaving lockdown, all lockdown restrictions in England are planned to be lifted by 21 June. This is the first day of Term 4 at Bishopstrow and also the start of the first Academic Summer Programme, with the second Academic Summer Programme commencing on 25 July.

In recognition of some of the ongoing uncertainties, we would like to confirm the following:

Refund Policy

We have revisited our Terms and Conditions and specifically our refund policy for cancellations associated with the ongoing pandemic. In the event that students are unable to travel to the UK to enrol at Bishopstrow due to ongoing flight restrictions, we are happy to offer a full refund as follows:

Enrolments for Term 4 and the Academic Summer Programme commencing 21 June: Notice to be provided no later than Monday 31 May i.e., 3 weeks before the start of term.

Enrolments for the Academic Summer Programme commencing 25 July: Notice to be provided no later than Monday 4 July i.e., 3 weeks before the start of the Programme.

If notice is served within three weeks of the start of term, we will be happy to offer a credit towards enrolment at Bishopstrow at a later date.

Quarantine

At this stage, it is unclear whether the existing 10 day quarantine arrangements for international arrivals will still be in place in the summer. However, in the event that quarantine is still required, all students enrolling at Bishopstrow for Term 4 or the Academic Summer Programme (on 21 June or 25 July) will have the opportunity to complete any quarantine period on site, at Bishopstrow.

For students enrolling for Term 4 or the first Academic Summer Programme, quarantine will commence on Thursday 10 June, whilst those students enrolling on the second Academic Summer Programme will enter quarantine on Wednesday 14 July. This ensures that students benefit from the 10 full period of Term 4 or the Academic Summer Programme, using the option to complete any quarantine period in advance.

We trust that these arrangements and specifically the flexibility being offered provide the confidence required for your clients to commit to one of the summer programmes on offer at Bishopstrow.

We will continue with Bishopstrow Online until the end of Term 4 for those who are unable or unwilling to travel to the UK, so please do ask if you have any questions and we would be delighted to assist.

Please contact Betty Dagistan on enquiries@bishopstrow.com for further details.

COVID-19 Update

Bishopstrow College opened for Term 2 on 4 January, with the majority of students on campus. Throughout the term, classes were delivered face-to-face - by those teachers who formed part of the resident 'boarding bubble' - and online. We continued to offer a full programme of extracurricular activities, albeit with some restrictions

On 22 February, the Prime Minister announced the government's plan for the return of all students to schools and colleges in England. In accordance with this plan, Bishopstrow returned fully to face-to-face education on Monday 8 March, with a number of arrangements in place, which will continue for Term 3:

College staff and students are being tested twice per week, as part of the NHS Test and Trace Scheme.

Staff and students are advised to wear face coverings in all areas, including classrooms, as a temporary extra measure.

Social distancing and the restriction of visitors and off campus activities continue.

We were delighted that we were able to welcome students back to Bishopstrow and look forward to welcoming further students back on campus for Term 3.

Over the course of the past 12 months, there have been no cases of COVID-19 at Bishopstrow. The College benefits from a rural location and we are confident that the campus provides a very safe environment for our students. For example, in Wiltshire (the county where Bishopstrow is located), there were 27.2 cases per 100,000 people in week ending 22 March. This compared to the average in England of 57.5 per 100,000.