



Bishopstrow College - Term 3 Newsletter

Greetings from the Principal

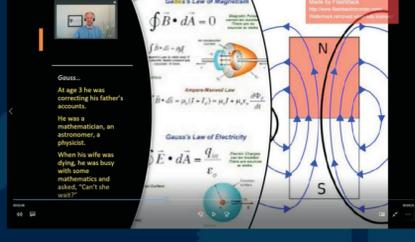
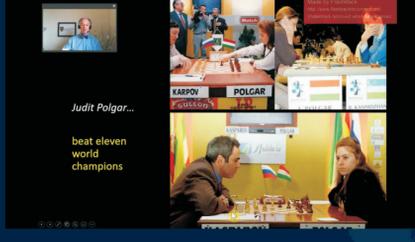
Little did I know when I started live online teaching in Cambridge in 2011, that in 2020 it would become the way that most of the world's children were having their classes. As we led this initiative in 2011, ahead of the world, little did I imagine that I would be with people leading the world again in 2020, but...

My colleagues at Bishopstrow have been tremendous. When I proposed to them that teaching online was a workable alternative to traditional classrooms they adopted the idea with remarkable energy and commitment. They understood instinctively that online provision did not have to mean boring pre-recorded material that they could have done on video tapes 40 years ago, that it would enable them to interact in a realistic exchange in real time with their students. Few schools or teachers have been so committed and energetic as the Bishopstrow staff in making online lessons so similar to the lessons that can be enjoyed in a physical classroom.



As well as replicating the classroom experience, we have generated the traditional school experience in many other ways. I have enjoyed being part of the team providing individual tutorials to students, where we discuss topics as varied as online technology, their favourite lesson of the week, and some difficult English pronunciation: "around the rugged rock, the ragged rascal ran" can be hard enough for native-speakers, but such challenges are part of the fun of responding imaginatively, both as teacher and student. This reactive and interactive possibility is characteristic of the approach to real live online teaching that we have undertaken here at Bishopstrow.

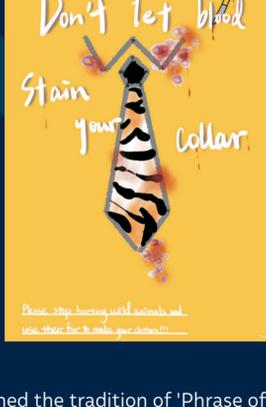
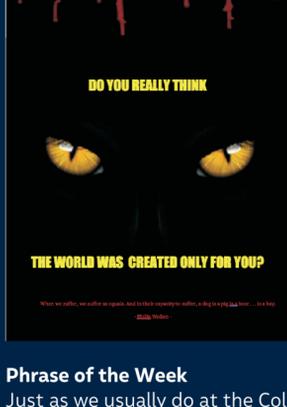
I have "visited" about 100 lessons during the last six weeks of Bishopstrow Online and see students engaged, interested and positive. I have seen the rainfall cycle presented by students in Geography, I have seen grammar puzzles solved by students in English, and in some Mathematics lessons I am sure I have been able to hear brains whirring as problems are posed and solved. Stars are awarded for demonstrating the Five Virtues of Bishopstrow College, Students of the Week are announced in the celebration assemblies, thoughtful PSHE is presented and considered each day, and exercise and wellbeing is encouraged at all times. It's rather like being on campus without bedtime and breakfast!



Academic Highlights

Humans and Other Species

The senior students have been doing some outstanding work online in Global Perspectives. As part of their project they were asked to do some research and put together a poster design for raising awareness for animal welfare issues. They really did rise to the challenge - some of their ideas are highlighted below. Despite Bishopstrow being online this term, we are delighted with the enthusiasm shown in their work; it has been a real pleasure to teach them.



Phrase of the Week

Just as we usually do at the College, Bishopstrow Online has maintained the tradition of 'Phrase of the Week' every Friday. This is when one student at the College is chosen to teach the other students a particular phrase in the English language. They do this by using the phrase in a conversation, which they then act out to the rest of the College.

In Week 2 we had Sofia with 'Find my feet'



In Week 3 it was Yuta with 'Break a leg!'



The students will be continuing with this tradition every Friday, and we look forward to it every week.

Sport and Activities for All

This term has been like any other term with regular sport and exercise. We have seen students engage in physical activities and learning about different sports and key skills. However, the biggest difference has been that we are 'Bishopstrow Online'. It has never been more important to support and ensure that all our students are active every day to take them out of their virtual classroom and take some exercise. Our students have found themselves learning many different sports including Rugby, Netball, Cricket and Football, which are commonly found in schools across the United Kingdom. Whilst learning about all the sports on offer, they have also been able to develop their physical skills. Students have taken part in exercises which are designed to test and develop their physical fitness skills as well as strength, balance, flexibility, and both cardiovascular and muscular endurance.

Students have had the opportunity, as always, to compete and earn stars for their respective houses. This has helped them to stay motivated through this difficult time and allowed competitiveness to occur whilst being away from the College. Over the past 6 weeks students have been actively engaged with the programme and have been designing their own exercise routines, achieving exercise goals, improving specific fitness skills, increasing sporting knowledge, trying new exercises and sports, and perfecting existing skills. This has been evident from the videos and photos sent in by them on a weekly basis.

At Bishopstrow we try and help our students understand the importance of exercise and physical activity in our lives. We also understand the limitations that families may face in terms of lack of facilities and equipment. For these reasons we have devised an exercise programme that has the capability to be tailored to the individual needs and requirements of our students. Through this process we are also continually striving to improve this experience for our students. So far this term it has been really encouraging to see just how active they can be. We have seen many positive results which have been testimony to their attitudes and commitment through these uncertain times.



Off-Timetable Days

Every term at Bishopstrow, the students are able to enjoy an 'Off-Timetable Day'. During Term 3, students were given the opportunity to try out new skills or showcase existing talents on our first 'Online Off-Timetable Day'.

The task was to produce an animated clip of a short story; this could be a recreation of a film, a historical novel or their own creation.

As ever the wide range of ideas and skills on display were fantastic. Some chose to display their wonderful ability to draw - Qianyi's jumping fox was a beautiful sequence of drawings; some chose to take advantage of "Apps" and create cartoon animation - Reo and Mata made a particular good example showing the difficulties of weight gain during lockdown! Anna created a haunting dream sequence using a number of different techniques and Sora brought Peter Rabbit to life in a fantastic way!

When setting tasks like this it is always interesting to see how the students will rise to the occasion and put their own spin on things. This task was no exception and we were extremely pleased with the creativity from our students, each and every one of them deserves praise. Well done!

Here is an example from the large array of films sent through.



Student Feedback

Like all schools around the world, the shift to online at Bishopstrow has inevitably resulted in challenges for staff and students alike. Against this background, given that online learning is a new experience for almost all staff and students at the College, we are delighted to share feedback from the current cohort of students enrolled.

With an 80% response rate, this feedback provides some key insights in relation to the student experience: Students are enjoying their classes, benefitting from support from teachers, making progress and feel part of the Bishopstrow community.

For further details, please click on the link below:

<https://www.bishopstrow.com/bishopstrow-online/>

Bishopstrow Online Term 4

Due to the current situation in the UK and, more importantly, given our desire to ensure that our students are safe, we have made the decision to continue Bishopstrow Online for Term 4. As you know Bishopstrow is very unique and it is extremely important that what we offer at Bishopstrow is continued through our Online Programme. Therefore, we believe, that our Online Programme is like no other.



We feel that it is key to continue with Bishopstrow Online so we can continue to give children the education they need and deserve. Offering our programme between June and August will ensure that children continue to have the preparation required either to go on to their next school in September or catch-up on any work they have missed. This is not just academically but socially and culturally as we continue with all things British.

We still have a few places available in Term 4, whether this is for 3 weeks, 10 weeks or anything in-between, so please do get in touch if you feel there are families we can help throughout the summer - enquiries@bishopstrow.com

Online Visits

As it is impossible to welcome agents and families to Bishopstrow College at present we would like to remind you that we would be extremely happy to arrange a 'Virtual Visit' where you can meet key members of staff and have a look around Bishopstrow. We will do these on an individual basis which will give you, and or the families, an opportunity to have a personal visit and see for yourselves how unique and special we really are, so please do get in touch to book a visit - enquires@bishopstrow.com

Bishopstrow Online Webinar

We were delighted to welcome over 60 Families, Agents and Schools to our webinar on the 29th May. We covered what online programmes were on offer and how we have managed to engage our students, many who will be returning in Term 4, alongside new students starting with us for the first time.



The Bishopstrow Online Webinar gave our audience an insight into what our students think of the programme and an opportunity to meet the Principal and Director of Studies for a live chat.

If you would like more information on the discussions we had please do get in touch and we would be happy to send through the recording.

We plan to have another webinar next term so please look out for information.

