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Dear Alumni of Hereford Cathedral School,

I hope that you are all coping well in these extraordinary circumstances of the worldwide Coronavirus pandemic. These are indeed challenging times for us all, and none of us is immune from its effects, even our Prime Minister and Royal Family have been affected. I know that some of you will have contracted the virus and others will have experienced problems with your employment as a result of the economic impact that Coronavirus is causing to our country. To all of you affected, my heartfelt best wishes, and I look forward to returning to normal communications and liaison with you once this dreadful disease has passed.

As you will be aware the Government has closed all schools, and Hereford Cathedral School has entered a new phase in its history, that of providing Remote Teaching and Learning. If you look at the School website you will see the amazing programme that we have put together. This has required considerable work from our teaching staff, Senior Leadership Team and Marketing Department. It has resulted in widespread approval from the pupil and parent body, which we are delighted about. That said, all of us have had to quickly upskill our IT expertise, and this has been no easy undertaking given the challenges of rural broadband connectivity. However, as you would expect, the teaching and support staff have embraced the challenges and we fight to survive another day!

The School has also been teaching and caring for children of key workers, our Science Department has loaned out all its goggles and safety glasses to a local GP syndicate and the DT department have been busy making safety masks for NHS staff.

Whilst doing our best to be positive and rise to the challenges presented, we are also all too well aware that HCS is in a vulnerable position. I am sure that it will come as no surprise to you that the impact of coronavirus on the financial security of independent schools, like any other business, is significant. In particular the damage to the cash flow of schools such as ours, which do not enjoy large endowments, represents a significant threat to our operational viability. Whilst over recent years HCS has kept fee increases broadly in line with inflation to minimise the impact on our parents, the result is that the School does not have significant reserves upon which it can draw.

As the vast majority of fee income is used to pay the salaries of staff, I expect you can imagine that many of our teaching and support staff are particularly anxious at this time. To assist our School break even this year, we have therefore very reluctantly decided to furlough the majority of our support staff; over 100 in total. In effect, this means that they will be taking a 20% pay cut over the next few months with the remainder of their salary being provided in due course by the Government. In addition, we are seeking the support of our teaching staff to take a similar cut in their salary. In recognition of the economic impact of the pandemic on our parental body, we have also decided that a reduction of 20% in fees will be introduced for the Summer Term and we will not increase fees in Autumn 2020. Despite all these measures, we expect that a number of our current families will have to approach us for fee support, and so our Bursary Fund will become even more critical to the transformation of young people's lives and outcomes.

Our Development Office remains open and Claire Morgan-Jones will be very happy to hear from any alumni. Claire can be reached on 01432 363590 or by email c.morganjones@herefordcs.com Claire also intends, in this second half of the lockdown, to ring as many of our over 70s alumni as possible, to say hello, and to see if there is anything we can do for them. We would encourage all alumni to reach out to each other through the OH community, either by phone or through our social media channels. You might

also like to trawl the OH archive of photos and magazines, available online through www.oldherefordiansclub.co.uk. For a login, please email Claire.

We recognise that many of you have a huge affection for Hereford Cathedral School, and that we all wish to see that it continues to thrive long after CV19 is over, providing an outstanding education for pupils from a broad range of backgrounds. Our School is a much loved and recognised establishment in our county, with a distinguished legacy over many years and we will need everybody's support in ensuring that we can overcome this unexpected short-term issue to secure the future of one of the UK's oldest schools. Any support that you can offer will be gratefully received.

I wish you and your families all the very best in keeping well and hope that you will remain safe and well - in body, mind and spirit.

With all best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

