Dear Parents and new Year 7 students

What does a school look like? Most of us would have been confident in answering this question until March 2020 when everything changed, even the very fundamental principle of how a school operates. The Covid-19 crisis showed just how important digital skills are and I am pleased that our students had the ability to focus on content and continue their studies successfully, despite the technical challenges thrust upon us. Over the next years, we will see a further increase of technology in education as digitalisation and artificial intelligence increases in all parts of society. Therefore, part of learning has to include being able to meet those challenges, even if the pace of progress means that we don't know how the world will look in the near future, let alone in 7 years, when your children graduate and leave for university.

Many of you will be aware that the focus of lessons is now on Computing rather than IT. This means that students learn about coding and programming, and there is much less focus on the acquisition of skills in the Microsoft suite of programs and standard applications, skills which are now seen as an essential foundation. Please note that our school systems all use the Microsoft Office 365 and whilst I understand that other systems are available, these are the ones that your children will use whilst at school. In preparation, we are asking for your support with the completion of two IT tasks this summer, in advance of their arrival into Year 7.

One task is to be completed in Microsoft PowerPoint, and the second in Microsoft Word. The tasks are to be submitted by email. Students need to be able to use Microsoft Outlook as part of regular communications with teaching staff and form tutors, and all three applications are in use as part of everyday life at Eltham College.

To ensure that all students have these skills, I would ask that you work with them to complete the following activities over the summer. The tasks should be enjoyable and their form tutors will draw on their submissions during the first few weeks in September. If you need access to guidance on using the applications, I recommend https://support.office.com/en-us/office-training-center.

1. Create a PowerPoint presentation about yourself and your hobbies. It should be no longer than 5 slides and include pictures and text, as well as transitions. Once the presentation is finished, please save it as: yourname_yourform_hobbies. Please send the file as an attachment to an email to your form tutor (all email addresses are given below).

2. Create a Word Document and write a minimum of 150 words about a book you have read recently. Did you like it? Why? Would you recommend that others should also read it?

3. Once you have written your review please use different fonts, colours and pictures to create an artistic masterpiece (we will display some of these in the library). Again, please save the file and name it yourname_yourform_nameofbook before sending it to your form tutor.

The school email system will not be set up for each student until the first few weeks of term and therefore, I would ask that messages are sent from parents' email addresses for this activity. We will not record or retain details of these email addresses and they will not supersede any contact details provided as part of the admissions process to Eltham College.

I hope that all students will enjoy these tasks and gain confidence in the skills they practice. We will, of course, help the students throughout their school career with any technical issues they might have. Being able to complete these tasks will enable them to make use of these skills in all subjects from the beginning. However, I cannot emphasis enough how important digital literacy is going to be for their lives and would like to recommend that they acquire a basic understanding of the following programs before they start in Year 7. I appreciate that not all parents will be in a position to facilitate this, but the above-mentioned Microsoft training offers excellent tutorials.

- Microsoft Outlook
- Microsoft PowerPoint
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Microsoft Teams

If you have any questions about the projects or the digital vision at Eltham College, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Freddie Meier
Assistant Head (Lower School)
kfm@eltham-college.org.uk

Deputy Head of the Lower School (overseeing year 7)

Ms Swadkin – lks@eltham-college.org.uk

Form Tutors and their email addresses:

Ms Duke (7KMD) – kmd@eltham-college.org.uk

Mr Bryans (7HOB) – hob@eltham-college.org.uk

Mr Merrett (7ADM) – adm@eltham-college.org.uk

Ms Paull (7EMP) – emp@eltham-college.org.uk

Mr Wren (7PJW) – pjw@eltham-college.org.uk

Ms Calwell (7MKC) – mkc@eltham-college.org.uk