



# NEWSLETTER

## COVID-19 update: Pulse and Water College Open as Usual

Following the advice from the government, Pulse and Water College will remain open as all our learners meet the criteria for exemption from the attendance restrictions. We will continue to operate the virtual learning solutions we have employed for the Tuition Service and for students who have had to self-isolate. Updates will be given following any changes.

If you have any questions or would like clarification on current College policy throughout this time, please call the school on 020 8317 2639 or send an email to [admin@pulsewatercollege.co.uk](mailto:admin@pulsewatercollege.co.uk).

For medical queries please see the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>



Unfortunately, Pulse and Water College isn't THIS open just yet, but we look forward to the day when lockdown is over and both staff and students can get right back to those activities that they love!

### Calendar and Events

- Summer term: *Mon 1 June — Fri 17 July*
- Achievement evening: *Cancelled this year due to COVID-19*

### Class updates

There are no major updates for the Coral, Quartz, and Garnet classes this circulation.

## Tips for creating a routine if you are studying at home



Image from: <https://www.ttgmedia.com/features/features/what-constitutes-mental-health-discrimination-in-the-workplace-20789>

One of the most important things for our mental health is having a structure to the day, particularly in uncertain times. Here are some tips for creating a new routine during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### COVID-19 and mental health

Because of COVID-19, we are having to cope with situations that can make us feel anxious and disrupt our usual way of life. When our usual structure to the days and weeks disappears, it can be very hard to motivate yourself to do things. Many of us feel like this – it is entirely normal!

If you can come up with a routine that you feel comfortable with, it can help you to feel that there is a reason to get up and a point to your day. Having set activities to keep you occupied gives you less headspace to worry and can relieve anxiety, making your day-to-day life feel more comfortable and safe. Here are some tips for creating a routine.

### Being productive

1. Keep to the same time every weekday
2. Get up early—this will give you a gentle start
3. Get washed and dressed—this will give you a psychological boost and make you feel prepared
4. Have breakfast so you are ready for the day
5. Have a look at what you want to achieve during the day (don't worry if you don't get it all done!)
6. Prioritise the things that are most important
7. When you start your first activity, focus on it entirely—this will give you a drive to complete it!
8. Be clear when to work and when to play
9. Don't forget to take a break—and if you passed on breakfast be sure to have a snack!



Image from: <https://visualmodo.com/improve-workday-productivity/>

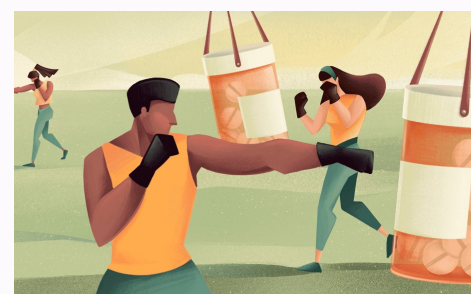


Image from: <https://www.knowablemagazine.org/article/health-disease/2019/exercise-as-medicine>

### Looking after yourself!

1. *Exercise!* Keeping active will keep you both mentally and physically fit!
2. *Keep in touch!* Speak frequently with the people you care about. You will spend less time worrying about them and will brighten their day and yours!
3. *Treat yourself!* It's important to have something to look forward to every day—it could be a nice dinner or a long bath—whatever works!

These are certainly strange times for everyone, but having a routine can help get you through. Here's hoping you all stay safe and stay positive!

Ms. Fiona Goldfinch

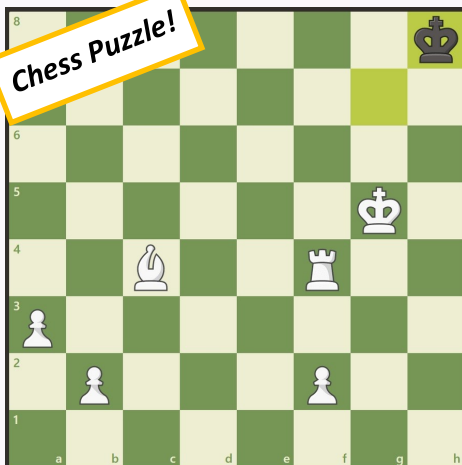


## Chess at Pulse and Water College

Finding fellow chess players with whom to share an interest in and passion for chess is not difficult in Pulse and Water College! The College Chess Club has around ten to fifteen consistent members who all have a lot of fun competing with each other and with members of staff. Playing Chess has loads of real benefits for young students as well: inculcating a healthy spirit of sportsmanship, developing strategies, thinking ahead, exercising precise concentration, and showing the rewards of discipline and patience. These are all transferrable skills that can be applied positively to our daily lives.

We have seen many players grow in confidence, determination, and resilience in general activities and in classroom lessons. Some students have actually gone on to coach their classmates and even some staff—hopefully with the same results!

### Chess Puzzle!



The Black King has just moved from the g7 square to the h8 square. It is White's turn to move, and White can checkmate the Black King in 2 moves. Can you find the two moves that would win the game? (You will need to account for both the White and Black moves.)  
Image from: chess.com website

The Chess Club also provides a great opportunities for students to exercise responsibility and learn how to talk to and listen to their peers respectfully. I find it immensely rewarding to see our students eager to learn and develop a new skill—especially one that helps to develop even more critical skills that are so essential for us all to practice. So many students first came to the Chess Club with just a little or no knowledge at all about playing Chess, but by the end of the first week, month, and term they had gone from absolute novices to significant threats for the average player!

Chess is played during the last period of the day along with other gaming activities. Although it has been mainly the male students showing interest, four female students have recently attended and are learning to play as well! The love for the game amongst all the frequent players is such that they welcome new players immediately with a smile, a question (“Do you know how to play Chess?”), and a ready chess board—irrespective of what they answer to the question! If you haven't already, come along for a game or two at the Chess Club sometime—it would be fantastic to see you there!

Mrs. Olusola Emmanuel Anyanwu

## Some words from our players!

My name is Ryan and I love Chess— Mrs. Emmanuel calls me a champion! I have been playing since year 8 and I am now in year 9. I learnt chess from Pulse and Water College and got better overtime. I play chess with some teachers, Kevin, Arthur, Bailey, Gabriel, and others! The skills I learnt from chess is to be focused and observant. I love chess because it is strategic and fun.— **Ryan**

I learnt to play chess better here. I played with Bailey. I did not win. I find chess boring because I am not really that interested, but it is fun watching others play sometimes.— **Romeo**

I've been playing Chess for three years, learning how to think tactically. I learnt by playing a lot, and I play with Ryan and Mrs. Emmanuel. — **Bailey**



Student frequently play against members of staff to train their skills!

## Never too young to learn!

COVID-19 has meant many have had to adapt to a new style of working and learning, and our staff are no different! Here, some staff members share their experiences since engaging with students and staff online has become the new normal.

Though online learning is a temporary measure, the disruption that can result from it has shown how valuable face-to-face learning in school really is. Some students have said they miss learning in a classroom environment, and without the appropriate learning materials have found motivating themselves to work very difficult. When students are ideal online learning can be great (it offers new ways of interactive and comfortable learning), but I've seen that the opportunities to teach and be taught in person should never be taken for granted — **Mrs. Olusola Emmanuel Anyanwu**

As a new member of staff, I must congratulate the majority of students that have surprised me in showing their willingness to contribute to the livelihood of the College during this very unusual time. I have found that students have coped well adapting to their new learning environment, and those who are able and regularly attend school have been patient and worked in collaboration with those working online, forging great relationships and supporting each other. — **Kay Grant**

## Bringing the Physical and Virtual Classrooms Together

The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent national lockdown has brought about an unprecedented time of virtual teaching and virtual learning. Though the technology has been about for a long time, the extent to which it could be used so frequently had not yet been practically explored until now. Students need access to learning materials whilst at home, and teachers need to prepare and deliver virtual (long-distance) lessons. Pulse and Water College adopted Microsoft Teams as the designated learning platform—it allows students to upload work and interact with staff and classmates in audio-visual conference-style meetings where they can share and learn together.

Adapting to this new method of learning and bringing the benefits and familiarity of physical learning to the virtual classroom was indeed challenging at first, and much needed to be done. However, with dedicated team training, practice, refresher training from other colleagues and constant support from the more tech-savvy staff, all members of staff have pulled through the initial difficulties. A massive thanks are owed to all those colleagues who also ensured that the students understood how to access their school emails and Student Workplace and made sure they had all the tutoring they needed for navigating Microsoft Teams! When the physical and virtual classrooms were not able to so neatly come together, students were sent hard copies of work and textbooks in order to make sure none fell behind.

The particular qualities of the virtual learning platform really helped to eliminate the barrier of distance learning, which if simply one-to-one over the phone could be too much of a change too quickly, which may have actually set our students back! In using communal video-oriented software, we were better able to recreate the learning environment that students would face in the College itself, rather than something so new it may have been more of a hindrance than a help! Of course, the virtual did come with its own set of unique problems that the physical classroom did not: one very early challenge experienced was the fluctuating of internet services, as many across the country have recently been depending on service providers for their work and their education. This meant that some lessons were affected negatively, and in some instances students missed lessons which then had to be caught up on. That said, teachers were very able to keep in touch and monitor student's participation and involvement in lessons.

In some ways then, the virtual classroom at Pulse and Water College has been able to maintain some resemblance to the physical, though as can be imagined, there are many notable difficulties and differences that only time will bring to light.

Mr. Ositadinma Onwuzulike

### What do you think?

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