

# Parent/Carer Update 27-3-20



Well, that's one week down and I hope that you have all managed without too many major problem. Going out for my once-a-day walk, it has been fantastic to see a real community spirit — rainbows in windows and everyone saying hello to each other (from a safe

distance!) The evening applause for NHS staff was also fantastic. I am convinced that, despite the difficulties and anxieties, there will be lots of good to come out of what is currently happening.

Here are just a few key updates:

### **Home Learning**



We now have a dedicated page on the website to keep all messages and documents about Home Learning in one place.

The latest addition is guidance about how to access Office365 apps at home (Word/PowerPoint etc.) if you don't already have them on your computer.

Looking through the work that has been set, I don't think there are going to be many students who haven't had enough to do. Getting the balance exactly right is going to be tricky so please do bear with us if it's not perfect.

## **Collection of Exercise Books/Kit/Equipment/Musical Instruments**

Apologies that the original plans to collect things were quickly overtaken by national events. Just a reminder that it is absolutely OK for any work to be done electronically, on paper or in another exercise book.

As promised, we will review the situation after the Easter break and will hopefully be able to make arrangements similar to those originally planned.

#### **Video Calling**

Although I am not the most technically proficient person in the world, I have been dipping my toe into the world of video-conferencing this week. Some of our students are telling us that they are feeling a little isolated at times, particularly if both parents are working, and I would suggest that this might be a good way for them to keep in touch with friends and family beyond 1-1 calls on Facetime or similar. Having a virtual work buddy sat next to you during a long day can only be a positive thing.

Some apps that are being used include:

- Zoom
- Google Duo
- House Party

#### **Scam Emails**

Having said that this situation is bringing out the best in most people, sadly it is also bringing out the worst in some.

We have been alerted by the Department for Education that some parents have received an email stating:

'As schools will be closing, if you're entitled to free school meals, please send your bank details and we'll make sure you're supported'.

This is a scam email - do not respond and delete immediately.

No doubt there will be other similar things – please be vigilant.

#### **Pastoral Contact**

Some of you will have already received a phone call or email from somebody at the school to see how things are going. At some stage, this will apply to all and, depending on how long the school is closed, we will repeat this at regular intervals.

For those of you with more than one child at the school, there may be separate contact for each one. Although there are benefits in having just one call or email, there are also good reasons to separate out those conversations to make sure that everyone gets a specific focus.

We have really appreciated the supportive nature of our conversations so far and grateful for your many kind words.

If you have any non-academic concerns then please feel free to get in touch with your child's form tutor, Head of Year or myself at any time.

I hope you and your family are safe and well.

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Best wishes

Andy Steele Headteacher

p.s. I will be writing to Year 11 parents and students separately next week with the latest news about exams, post-16 transition and expectations.