# Parent/Carer Update 8-5-20





Welcome to the latest update from Highworth Warneford School under lockdown. I am sure that many of you are keenly awaiting the press conference on Sunday, which might herald the start of the slow return to

some sort of normality but, I think it's fair to say that it will be many months until schools will be fully open. Our senior team have already had preliminary discussions about how we might begin to get some staff and students back in but I am afraid that, until we have firmer details, we are as guilty of speculation as anyone else. Meanwhile, we appreciate your patience and continuing support.

# **Home Learning**

As you would expect, we have received a variety of feedback from you about our version of home learning. While most has been very positive, we are definitely seeing a real polarisation with how students are engaging and coping with the work. The majority are ploughing on with decent levels of commitment but I have heard from some parents whose youngsters are finding it difficult to keep on top of everything that has been set and spending far too much time on their home studies.

Where we have been made aware of this, our advice has been to take a measured approach that is mindful of the welfare of the child and suggested that they limit the amount of time spent, even if some tasks are not completed. Nobody is going to be in trouble for not doing every single piece of every bit of work set. If a teacher sends a reminder then there is no problem in replying that the work has not been finished because of time – their intention is not to raise stress levels but to remind you that we are here to help!

However, to give some genuine respite and breathing space, for the last two weeks of this half-term, we are going to do the following for Key Stage 3 classes:

- Week beginning 11/5/20 reduce the amount of work being set to roughly half of current amounts
- Week beginning 18/5/20 set optional project work with a variety of choices

This will hopefully cut anxiety, give time for other non-school activities and allow students some capacity to catch up with previous work if they want to keep on top of things.

Year 9 core and Year 10 work will continue as normal.

I have also been asked by some parents to change how the work is released onto Class Charts. I am afraid that there is no commonality of request and we believe that the current system of setting work on a Sunday/Monday to allow for the week ahead to be planned will cause the least angst overall.

On a practical note, I understand that the fact that tasks "disappear" from Class Charts is causing some confusion. They are still there but the due date has passed. If you hit the button which asks for homework to be shown by the date set, they should be visible again. If not then just email the teacher.

In summary, I know the situation is not ideal and a complete school experience cannot be replicated in the home. However, I have been really proud of the teachers and students and extremely grateful for your support in making things work as well as possible.

### Survey

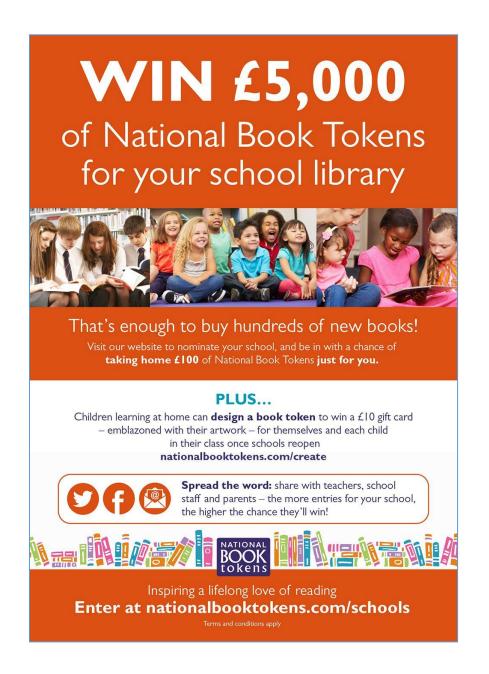
Thank you for the large response to the survey I asked you to complete a couple of weeks ago. It really was helpful to get an insight into how things were going at the time. I will hopefully repeat this at the start of June to see if there have been any changes.

I have attached the results along with this update but one fascinating fact that isn't immediately obvious is that the students who were reported to have the best routine were, on average, also rated as being much happier by their parents. I will let you draw your own conclusions.

#### **National Book Tokens**

Our school needs you! Help us win £5,000 of National Book Tokens for the fabulous school library - and earn £100 for yourself!

Enter the competition online - it only takes a minute: <u>www.nationalbooktokens.com/schools</u>



### Assemblies

I hope your child has been able to access our new series of assemblies. Thank you to Mr McKinstry for the most recent one, linking VE Day to the current crisis.

We will continue with these – they will be released every Thursday morning.

#### **Pastoral Support**

By now, all parents should have had at least two, and possibly more, contacts from the school to check that all is going well. I just wanted to remind you that this works both ways – if you or your child are having any difficulties at all then please feel free to get in touch with us – the tutor is usually the first port of call.

We may not be able to help in every situation but we can try, or at least signpost other services that might be more appropriate.

#### **SEED Day**

We recently received this letter, following our SEED Day fundraising earlier in the year. Well done to all of those involved – particularly the Year 9 Student Leaders who did the bulk of the work.

Secondary Education to Encourage Development. S.E.E.D.	
S.E.E.D.	
39, Menlove Gardens West Liverpool L18 2DL	
feendary Education to Encourage Development Reg. Charity No. (181166) email: <u>rosemary.brice@tiscali.co.uk</u>	
21st April 2020	
Mrs K Green Highworth Warneford School Shrivenham Rd, Highworth Swindon SN6 7BZ	
Dear Mrs Green,	
Thank you so much for your school's very generous donation to SEED of £1,039 which has appeared in our bank account!	
I know how much work and organisation goes in to a fund raising day, and we are very appreciative of everyone's commitment to sponsoring students in Tanzania through SEED.	
Will you please thank all the staff and pupils who helped to raise this amazing amount for our students? As with students in the UK, school children in Tanzania are also all at home from school because of the Covid-19 pandemic.	
We hope that all of our students and all at Highworth Warneford School will remain safe and well during this difficult time.	
Thank you again, with best wishes	
from David. Rosemany	
David and Rosemary Brice (Joint Treasurers of SEED)	

# **Mutual Aid Group**

I would like to draw your attention to the work of this excellent group, which has over 600 members and rising in the Highworth area. If you, or somebody you know, needs any support at all then please do get in touch with them. They understand that it is sometimes difficult to accept that help is needed and they offer complete discretion.



As ever, I hope that you and your family are safe, happy and well.

Best wishes

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Andy Steele Headteacher