

Highworth Warneford School

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Dear Parents/Carers of Year 7-9 Students

I hope that you and your family remain well and have enjoyed your time together during the recent break.

Last week, the government announced that their five tests required to further ease the lockdown have been met. Consequently, they have asked secondary schools to prepare to open for some "face-to-face contact" for students in *Year 10* from Monday 15th June. The obvious consequence of this is that there will definitely be no physical time in school for other secondary age students for the rest of this academic year.

Home Learning

Therefore, home learning will continue to be the principal method of education for all lower-school students for the rest of the summer term. Although I was really pleased with the quality of the work set before the break, subject leaders at the school are keenly aware of the need to produce materials that offer progression and motivation and I know are working very hard to further develop our curriculum offer.

One piece of good news is that Class Charts have introduced a new function that will allow work to be submitted directly by uploading it online, rather than random emails pinging around. Not every piece of work will have this requirement but it's worth looking out for in the coming weeks. Teachers are obviously still happy to respond to requests for help with work via email.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind parents of Year 9 students that, for the rest of the term, they should only be completing tasks for English, maths and science along with transition work for their allocated option subjects for next year. Anything else that is put onto Class Charts can safely be ignored.

Student Engagement

The one thing that the last two months has shown me is that there really isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to supporting students (and parents) to study at home. In any one week, I was guaranteed to receive feedback from different people with entirely opposing views, depending on their own context. I hope we have managed to steer a course that has been of most benefit for the most people, without introducing barriers to learning for those in less than perfect situations.

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However, there is always going to be a delicate balance – particularly when it comes to deciding whether to apply pressure to complete the work set. While the mental wellbeing of students continues to be the top priority, I am aware that there are a significant minority who have either struggled to engage with work or have mentally decided that they are on an extended holiday.

I realise that I am in danger of provoking a negative response from some quarters but it would be remiss of me if I did not point out the dangers of some youngsters eventually returning to school at a major disadvantage because they have done very little compared to their peers. If you are worried that your child might fall into this category then please do contact us and we will do what we can to help get them back on track.

Of course, we completely understand there are some situations that can't easily be resolved – we aren't trying to add any pressure to already difficult circumstances.

Key Worker/Vulnerable Students

Although the majority of students who have attended school throughout lockdown have been a fairly settled group, we have had an increasing number of requests for places over recent weeks. To ensure that we are properly prepared to accept all those that need a place, we are going to introduce a new system for parents to let us know a week in advance what their intentions are.

Here is a [link](#) to make a request for a place for the week beginning Monday 8th June.

Links will be sent out every Monday for the following week.

Apologies to those of you who have already emailed me their requirements.

Mental Health Support

I would like to remind you about the excellent service provided by Kooth and would appreciate you sharing the attached flyer with your child – a couple of weeks later than the reason for it being produced but still very relevant.

The lockdown has gone on much longer than any of us ever anticipated and there are few signs that we will be back to normal, even by September. If we had a magic wand, we would wave it and get all of our students back in school today. However, we know that the next steps are not going to be simple and we will continue to keep you informed of our latest plans as the national situation develops.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Yours faithfully,



Andy Steele
Headteacher