



Dear parents,

Well, this is not quite the end of term letter I thought I would be writing at the start of the term! I would like to thank you again for your incredible support. Somehow setting up and running a Stay at Home school is keeping me busier than ever, but I hope that over the next couple of weeks I will get the time to respond to all of your messages if I haven't had time to do so yet!

I know this is a lot of information to send just before the start of a holiday, but I hope it will answer any questions that you have and give you an idea of the direction we are moving in ready for the start of next term.

It is now 2 weeks since school closed, and several weeks since things felt completely "normal". This has been a massive test for our school community and for us all. I have said many times to the students that:

- ✓ We cannot change what is happening, but we are in control of how we respond.
- ✓ Events like this are rare and challenging, but they make us realise what is important in our lives.
- ✓ We will get through this together as a community.

so

- ✓ Focus on what you can do to keep yourself and others safe.
- ✓ Be kind to yourself – listen to music, watch TV, play on your games console and forget about it all.
- ✓ Talk to friends and family about what is worrying you.

I hope this is helpful advice for us all, and that you can reinforce these messages at home.

The first 2 weeks of Alderman White Stay at Home School have been a huge learning curve for us all. All of our staff have worked incredibly hard to learn new ways of setting work, teaching and supporting students and families – it seems incredible now that most teachers hadn't ever used google classroom until 2 weeks ago! Staff have wanted to provide lots of resources and activities, but we know that the different platforms we are using have at times caused confusion and that we haven't always been clear about whether activities are compulsory or optional, and the timescale to complete a task.

Our students have suddenly got a huge amount more choice and responsibility for their learning, which I know has felt overwhelming for some, and parents are adjusting to balancing their own responsibilities and commitments with much more family time and overseeing school work. We are currently reviewing what has gone well and what we can do better, and are taking into account feedback from staff, students and parents.

This is a massive disruption to our normal lives, and there is no right or wrong way of dealing with it – you have to find the way that is right for your family, and we will try and fit what we can offer around that! Please don't feel worried or guilty if your child hasn't done much school work, but have focused on other activities instead. We totally understand that school work may not be the immediate priority for you or your child – the priority is that they are safe, healthy and happy. Remember that every other young person in the country is in the same position and we will all work together to address any impact on learning and progress in the longer term.

### **The Easter holidays**

This will of course be an unusual Stay at Home holiday, but it is still a school holiday, and family time, relaxation and hobbies should be the top priority!



- Teachers have been asked not to set any new “work” during the Easter holidays.
- Students can use this time to catch up on any compulsory tasks, but do not have to, and students who have been doing a lot of work set by school should make sure they have a break!
- Teachers may suggest optional activities that students can choose to join in with **if they want to** as part of their Stay at Home holiday activities
- If students want to complete a learning diary during the holidays and submit it to their tutor, it would be great to hear what they have been up to (but it is not required)
- We want to ensure that staff have the opportunity to rest and relax – they may not be available to answer questions on google classroom or by email
- We are still here if students or parents need us – contact [studentsupport@whptrust.org](mailto:studentsupport@whptrust.org).

### **Student Work expectations**

Please see the attachment FAQs document if you would like more guidance on work expectations or have any unanswered questions.

If you haven’t had a chance to do so yet, or would like to revisit it, please do read the vision for our Stay at Home school on our website: [aldermanwhite.school/stay-at-home-school](http://aldermanwhite.school/stay-at-home-school). Please note:

- We do not expect you to home educate your child, and we have all got to take the positive opportunities from this experience to do things at home that we may not usually have time for.
- Encourage independence, choice and creativity. This is how your child will be used to the curriculum working.
- Mistakes are positively encouraged and can be discussed as part of the learning process.
- Our students are encouraged to be independent learners so remind them to use a “Brain – Book – Buddy – Boss” approach, as they would in a classroom.

### **Year 11**

We know that this has been a very strange time for Year 11. We will contact parents and students as soon as we are able to with regard to the arrangements for GCSE grades but it is our expectation that we will be expected to submit the grades that we were predicting based on work undertaken up until it was announced that GCSEs would not go ahead. Students and parents will have the opportunity to appeal the grades awarded, and students will also have the opportunity to take exams as soon as possible after schools re-open or in the summer of 2021 for any subjects that they wish to. We are working closely with Bramcote College 6<sup>th</sup> form and other post-16 providers to ensure that students are prepared and ready to start their A levels, college course or Apprenticeship in September, and will have a focus on that throughout the summer term.

### **Virtual Enrichment**

As you know, our enrichment programme is integral to our school life. We now have an AW YouTube channel where we are sharing a new clip from our productions and performances. These are a great reminder of the talent and commitment of our school community and are really uplifting to watch! [www.youtube.com/channel/UC1eGZTUdyhphIAjw9CNWGSg](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1eGZTUdyhphIAjw9CNWGSg)

This week we have established our Stay at Home Choir. Students, staff and parents are welcome to join! There are lots of examples of virtual choirs online. Choir members will record themselves singing to a backing track at home, and the recordings will be combined into a choir performance. Contact [cameron.wedgeworth@whptrust.org](mailto:cameron.wedgeworth@whptrust.org) if you would like to get involved.

Virtual orchestra and Swing Band are in the process of being established, and it would be great to see and hear some AW family and remote ensemble performances, so get rehearsing and performing over the holidays! We will consider how to develop more virtual enrichment opportunities next term.

We have been in touch with the organization who provide our instrumental lessons in school. They are in the process of setting up a remote offer for the summer term, and we will ensure that parents of students who have instrumental lessons receive this information as soon as we receive it – thank you to those of you who

have enquired about this already. In the meantime, I hope students are spending plenty of time practicing at home where possible.

### **Support with Free School Meals**

Many families in receipt of Free School Meals are now signed up to our scheme with our partners at HOPE Nottingham. Once a family has signed up to the scheme we transfer Free School Meal funds to HOPE and they create and deliver a weekly food parcel for the household. A large number of teaching and support staff are volunteering at HOPE to make up and deliver food parcels, and have found this a very rewarding and inspiring experience.

If your child(ren) at Alderman White receive free school meals but you haven't yet signed up for this scheme, please contact [studentsupport@whptrust.org](mailto:studentsupport@whptrust.org) if you would like to receive this support.

We recognise that families who are not in receipt of Free School Meals may find themselves in need of urgent support in the coming weeks and months. Please contact [studentsupport@whptrust.org](mailto:studentsupport@whptrust.org) if you need to access this scheme, even if your child does not currently receive Free School Meals.

The staff who are volunteering are aware of the critical importance of donations at this time. Please do donate if you can – the website lists the items required and most supermarkets have donation points. If you have time and would like to volunteer please contact HOPE.

[www.hope-nottingham.org.uk/local-foodbanks/](http://www.hope-nottingham.org.uk/local-foodbanks/).

### **How can my child get support?**

- Tutors are setting up google classrooms so that they can maintain contact with their tutor group and support them – please check that your child has joined their tutor group classroom once it has been set up.
- Students can email (or message on google classroom / MS Teams) their tutor, Progress Leader or teachers in the way they would ask a question at school. If they don't get a reply after 2 working days (Monday – Friday) or if it is an emergency they can email [studentsupport@whptrust.org](mailto:studentsupport@whptrust.org)
- Students can access IT support at [helpdesk@whptrust.org](mailto:helpdesk@whptrust.org).

### **Who to contact**

- You can contact school on 0115 917 0424 or [white@whptrust.org](mailto:white@whptrust.org) Monday to Friday 8am – 4pm
- If there is something that we need to be aware of, or you want to contact someone about your child's progress, contact their tutor or Progress Leader in the usual way.
- If you need to contact our safeguarding team, speak to someone urgently, or you have not had a reply after 2 working days, please contact [studentsupport@whptrust.org](mailto:studentsupport@whptrust.org).
- Parents can access IT support at [helpdesk@whptrust.org](mailto:helpdesk@whptrust.org).

### **Hope is stronger than fear**

I emailed all students earlier in the week, which I finished by reminding them of Michelle Obama's words to young people in her last ever speech as First Lady: **"Don't be afraid. Be focused. Be determined. Be hopeful. Be empowered. Lead by example with hope, never fear."** I hope they will be able to do this most of the time – but please make sure that they know that we will all help them when they can't.

Enjoy your Stay at Home holiday. I hope that you all take care and stay safe. The summer term will start on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April with a new assembly, learning activities and enrichment programme, even if we can't actually leave our homes and go to the school site!

Yours faithfully,

**Mrs A Mellors**  
Headteacher

## Alderman White School: Stay at Home School FAQs

### Where is work set?

We are now moving to set all work on google classrooms (or MS teams for classes already using this) and going forward teachers will no longer be setting Stay at Home activities on Go for Schools. Mrs Holling bravely recorded an assembly for students this week which explains how we expect them to be working – this is available on our Stay at Home webpage and for students on google classrooms.

### How does my child access google classroom?

Teachers are now setting up a google classroom for their class or year group in addition to the main year group google classroom. Please encourage your child to check their school emails daily and join any google classrooms that they are invited to. This means that they (and you) can communicate directly with their teachers if you have any questions or concerns about tasks being set if necessary.

We will be adding a list of google classroom codes to our Stay at Home webpage soon – your child only needs to join the pages for their usual teaching groups or year group. Mr Young is going to be releasing a series of videos on how to use Google Classroom effectively, including support on how to create documents and hand in work in, and you will start to receive a weekly email telling you which tasks your child has completed (please focus on what they HAVE done, not what they haven't – this may be optional!)

### Does my child need to print everything?

There should be no need to print work at home. Students can complete and submit work on google classrooms (if they can't do this for individual documents that may be a mistake– we are all learning how to do this too!!) Or they can complete the work on paper.

### What does my child need to complete?

Teachers have been asked to make sure that any tasks set are labelled clearly to indicate whether they are **compulsory** or **optional**, and to give a clear timescale for completion, which should be **at least a week**, but may be **much longer**. Please see the activities being set as a menu that your child can choose from during the time allocated for formal learning.

We recommend the following amount of formal learning time for the majority of learners:

- Year 7-9: 2-4 hours per day Monday – Friday
- Year 10-11: 3-5 hours per day Monday – Friday

Please ensure that plenty of time is built into the day for enrichment, any broader educational or developmental activities that students may not usually have time for, as well as relaxation, exercise and social interaction with family and friends, and any caring responsibilities – these are great for their development as young adults.

### How does my child record their learning?

We have introduced a weekly Learning Diary which we would like every student to complete. This can include any learning or developmental activity as well as formal learning activities set by teachers. The diary template is available on google classroom and our website, and has been emailed to students. This should be submitted to your child's tutor every Monday for the previous week.

### Can my child access their school IT documents?

Our IT team have migrated student documents to One Drive on Microsoft Office 365 so that students can now access their files from the cloud without needing to use remote access. Please see the email to students for details – the guide will also be added to the resources available at [aldermanwhite.school/stay-at-home-school](http://aldermanwhite.school/stay-at-home-school).

**What if my child hasn't accessed google classroom yet?**

We are aware that some students aren't yet accessing google classroom.

- If your child hasn't yet accessed google classrooms but has a chromebook, laptop or tablet and internet access, please use the guidance on our Stay at Home school webpage and seek any IT support required from [helpdesk@whptrust.org](mailto:helpdesk@whptrust.org).
- If your child doesn't have access to wifi and a device (tablet, laptop or chromebook) at home and you are not able to make this available, please contact their Progress Leader by email and we will try to support with this
- If your child has specific needs which mean that this is not an appropriate way of working, please contact their Progress Leader or keyworker to discuss how best we can support them.

**What if I see an online resource that isn't provided by school?**

I know that many parents and students are locating some great educational resources online. Please do email [mandy.holling@whptrust.org](mailto:mandy.holling@whptrust.org) with the details of any resources or websites. We can "screen" these and advise you and other parents about whether we recommend that you access them.