



Dear parents,

I hope last week went as well as possible (despite the change in the weather!) and you have had a relaxing weekend. As always, it is amazing how much there is to update you about after just 5 “school” days!

Parent and student feedback

It was great to have a record turnout at our first Virtual Parent Forum last Wednesday. The minutes will be published on our website soon. There was a lot of positive feedback for the work that school staff are doing, which was very welcome and much appreciated, but as always lots of constructive questions and suggestions about how we can improve things further at this challenging time. It is always so useful to hear different perspectives and one of the interesting observations was that staff and parents are having much the same experience – juggling supporting home learning with our other work and caring responsibilities in a challenging context where day to day tasks can be much more complex than they used to be. It was agreed that more regular Parent Forum Meetings would be useful during school closure and our **next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 20th May at 6.30pm**. Please contact the school office (0115 917 0424 or white@whptrust.org) if you would like to receive the link to attend the meeting.

We have carried out a survey with Year 11 students to ensure we are providing the GCSE courses that they want to continue with in order to sit the exam next year and post-16 guidance and preparation materials and courses that will enable them to prepare for next year. If you are a Year 11 parent, please could you check that your child has completed this – they were emailed the link on their school email address.

We are going to carry out a student questionnaire over the next week to get feedback from as many students as possible about their experience of Stay at Home school. The link will be sent to your child by email – please encourage them to respond promptly. This will help us to continue developing and improving our Stay at Home School provision.

Communication

This remains a priority, in order to keep us all connected while we are apart.

Students should check their school email address daily (Monday – Friday). This is where they will find invitations to live lessons, important notices and google classroom notifications (if these are enabled).

Please use our Stay at Home School webpage aldermanwhite.school/stay-at-home-school to find key information. This may help you to solve any issues or answer questions. If you are not able to find answers here, please contact your child’s tutor or Progress Leader. You can get support with IT issues from helpdesk@whptrust.org.

Please ensure that your child completes their Learning Diary each week and submits it to their tutor on google classroom by the end of the day on Monday for the previous week. We are using the diaries to track student engagement in our curriculum and developmental activities and it is a great contact point between tutors and students.

We use the White Hills Park Trust newsletter which is issued each Friday and our school Facebook page to share news, links and to celebrate success. Both can be accessed from our website. Any information for parents is also sent out by email through our My Ed system.

Supporting wellbeing



Over the last week, our tutor and pastoral teams have focused on contacting all parents by phone or email to see how you and our students are doing, and to check there are no welfare or school work related issues that we should be aware of. This will continue this week, so don't worry if you haven't yet had an email or call. In some cases, staff will be using their personal phone and will withhold their number. Please do get in touch with your child's tutor, Progress Leader or keyworker if there is anything we need to be aware of or can help with.

The school office remains open remotely Monday to Friday 8am – 4pm (0115 917 0424 or white@whptrust.org). If you need to contact our safeguarding team, or to speak to someone urgently, please contact studentsupport@whptrust.org.

We continue to offer supervision at Alderman White for the children of critical workers who cannot stay safely at home and for students who require additional support. **At present we are not aware of any critical workers requiring provision for their children on the Bank Holiday (Friday 8th May) so we do not intend to open our provision on this day.** Please contact the School Office to book supervision or studentsupport@whptrust.org if your child requires additional support. Please note that no-one can attend our school site if someone in their household is unwell, and we follow Public Health England guidance re personal hygiene and social distancing.

Parents of children who receive Free School Meals should have received a separate message with regard to our move to the national voucher scheme, as well as the option for a continued delivery from HOPE. Please contact the school office if you have not received this.

If your child is not able to access work on a particular day due to illness or other family circumstances, that is your decision to make, and their wellbeing must always come first. Please do contact our Attendance Officer, Mrs. Philpot (linda.philpot@whptrust.org), or your child's Progress Leader if this is the case - we can then make staff aware that your child is "absent" from Stay Home school and may need deadlines adjusting.

We are aware that some of our students may be continuing with part time jobs during the lockdown period. If your child is working during the lockdown, please ensure that their employer is complying with all of the government rules in relation to COVID-19. We are seeking additional guidance with regard to under-18s. Please note that students must not be undertaking paid work during normal school hours when their priority should remain their education. The guidance on child employment can be found here; all of the usual regulations still apply during lockdown. www.gov.uk/child-employment

Very sadly, a number of families and staff members in our school community have been affected by bereavement, both COVID-19 related and non-COVID-19 related, since school closed. Please know that we are thinking of anyone in this situation and appreciate that the current lockdown arrangements make bereavement and grieving even more difficult. We will always support in any way that we can. Please do make us aware of any family circumstances that may affect your child so that we can discuss the support that we can offer.

The attachment includes a wide range of support organisations for young people and families. Please do let us know if you require any support or signposting of relevant services.

Stay at Home Learning

Feedback from Parents Forum is that the move to Google Classroom and our summer term curriculum has made it easier to know what your child should be completing, and that the volume of work being provided is about right for most students.

Students in Year 7-10 should have a google classroom for each of their subjects. The list of google classroom codes is available on our Stay at Home School webpage. If your child isn't sure which classes they belong to,

they can check this on their timetable in Go for Schools (by clicking the “back” button until they reach a week that school was open). In addition, there is a year group and tutor group classroom.

We are working to ensure that wherever possible work is scheduled to appear on the classroom on a Monday morning with a deadline of one week. Students can follow their usual school timetable, the suggested timetable provided, or create their own timetable using the blank timetable provided. These have been sent to students and parents previously and are available on our Stay at Home School webpage.

We aim to set work that students can complete without your assistance. We encourage students to be independent learners and use “Brain – book – buddy – boss”. Arranging to study with a friend remotely using facetime or WhatsApp, or to get in touch with others in their class if they are struggling with something, can replace the peer support they are familiar with in a classroom. If they are finding the work too difficult or easy, do communicate with their tutor or Progress Leader.

We are increasing the number of “live” video conferencing learning opportunities we are offering to students using Google Meet and Microsoft Teams. Please ensure that you have replied to the My Ed message to confirm that you are willing for your child to join these sessions. Some sessions take the form of a lesson; others are a shorter explanation of the task and opportunity to check anything that students are not sure about. We will provide more support to students this week on how to access any sessions that they are invited to.

We want students to have time in their day to be physically active, read, take part in family activities and hobbies (old and new), as well as have time to socialise remotely with family and friends, and to relax. You may find a variety of online and home-based educational activities to take part in that extend learning even if they are not part of the work set by teachers. The attached list of curriculum resources may be useful and is also available from our Stay at Home webpage.

We do not currently have a process for sharing google classroom notifications directly to parent emails. We advise that you look at your child’s google classrooms with them at least weekly to check what they have completed and still need to do.

Year 10 and 9 Progress Exams

We are working on a timetable and arrangements for our Year 10 Progress Exams from 1st – 12th June and Year 9 English, Maths and Science exams (29 June – 3 July). We will get timetables to you as soon as possible. If school is open, we will endeavor to run exams on site if at all possible, with social distancing and hygiene rules in place. If this is not possible, we will make arrangements for students to complete their exams at home. Teachers will be ensuring that students know what will be included in the exam and the learning activities they are being set will help them to prepare.

Year 11 Curriculum and GCSE Grades

We are now involved in the process of producing Centre Assessment Grades for this year. We are not allowed to share these grades with parents or students. The Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) has produced guidance which states: ***“There may be instances where schools and colleges or teachers are put under external pressure from a candidate or their parent/guardian to influence the decision-making on a grade or rank order. Any external pressure must be reported to the exam board(s) who may investigate this as potential candidate malpractice.”*** Please know that we will be completing this process with complete integrity and a desire to ensure that no students are disadvantaged.

We are continuing to develop our Year 11 curriculum of post-16 preparation courses and pre-reading. All of the information about this is available from the main Year 11 #Team22 google classroom. In addition, online continuation GCSE classes will be starting over the next week for students who have indicated that they wish to continue with a GCSE course with a view to taking the exam next year. In normal circumstances our Year

11 students would now be entering the final week of preparation before their GCSEs. It is really important that, instead, they are spending time continuing to learn and getting ready for the next stage of their education.

Planning for School to Re-open

As you would no doubt expect, we are starting to consider the measures that we will need to put in place in order for school to begin to re-open. We have been assured that this will be a gradual process, and that school leaders will be consulted about the best way of doing this. At present there is no timescale for this - we will communicate any more information to parents and students as we receive it.

One of the issues for all schools will be ensuring access to the hygiene and cleaning materials required. Where possible we intend to be innovative and make our own solutions, such as screens for areas that will require them. While we hope that a centralised system will be put in place to provide the necessary supplies and equipment to schools, if you are able to offer any support in sourcing a supply of contactless liquid soap dispensers, alcohol-based hand sanitiser and dispensers (preferably contactless), and antibacterial surface cleaning equipment that can be used safely by children aged 11-16 within a classroom environment, please do contact me.

The number of people who can access testing for COVID-19 has now been significantly increased. We would ask that anyone in our school community with possible symptoms who qualifies for a test and is able to access one does so. Widespread testing is an important part of any strategy to safely end the current lockdown arrangements.

Virtual Enrichment

It was lovely to receive the following email from some appreciative grandparents this week: "We want to say a big thank you for your 'Stay at Home' videos that are accessible by YouTube. It has given us immense pleasure, especially during this lockdown period, to watch excerpts from previous shows and the latest collaborations. They are a joy to watch. All show the talents and commitment of students and staff and the effort undertaken is a credit to all involved." We hoped that our YouTube channel would help people to feel connected during our lockdown and it is lovely to hear that we are achieving that. Well done and thank you to everyone involved!

Yours faithfully,

Mrs A Mellors

Headteacher