



6th April 2020



COMMUNITY

Corona Virus Update 13: 6th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I and my Senior Leadership Team are writing this on what would have been, for us and most other schools, the end of the spring term and the start of the Easter holidays. With lengthening days and rising temperatures, most teachers and pupils would have been looking forward to time outdoors, trips away and well-earned relaxation before the arrival of the summer term and the GCSE exam period. But, as we all know, we're all in the middle of a wholly different and unprecedented situation.

My staff have been working tirelessly to ensure the school runs as close to normal as it possibly can. We have climbed mountains together when it has come to building an electronic school through the power of e-learning - fast forwarding a year should we have been in school. This has inevitably brought new issues and I thank those that are working respectfully with my staff to ensure we get this as right as we possibly can.

The sections below outline key updates and arrangements and replace what would have been our Termly Newsletter. I and my team have collaboratively condensed things as much as we can to continue the communication that has so far been positively received.

On behalf of all the Governors and staff at Newsome High School, I'd like to wish you a happy and healthy Easter.



Update on Home Working/Learning

- A high number of students have been accessing our E-learning through the different Google classrooms that have been put in place by all our departments. Students have been producing high quality work and have shown a fantastic amount of engagement with staff. For those students unable to access E-learning, work packs have been made available for them to use.
- Home working can often be difficult for students as well as their parents/carers. Please ensure you continue to support each other and also use the school website for updates on how to enhance learning at home for both yourselves and your children.
- Over the Easter period, there is a 'Crackin' Competition'. Students can write an inspirational speech aimed at the nation to inspire and promote positive energy in these difficult times. Please refer to the website for full details on this fantastic competition for all year groups.
- Our whole school reward system is still in place. Staff will continue to reward students who have completed their work to a high level or those who have gone above and beyond. Please encourage your children to maintain their usual standard of work in order to push towards earning their RITA reward badges.
- For students who have special educational needs, support remains available. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any difficulties accessing our E-learning platform or indeed, if you require any support during this time.
- Where possible, any EHCP annual reviews will continue to take place and staff will be in touch in due course.

Food Supplies for Free School meal Families

- All students eligible for Free School Meals will receive an Asda E-voucher to cover the Easter period (6th April to 17th April 2020). This voucher can be used online or in store. You do not need to print it. Open the link in the email OR present your phone screen to the checkout operator or scan at self service checkout. If you think you are eligible and have not received any correspondence please email FSM@newsomehigh.kirklees.sch.uk
- From the 20th April 2020 the Government Free School Meal voucher scheme will start. You will be sent an email with a 16 digit eCode. You will need to visit www.freeschoolmeals.co.uk and enter your eCode. You will then be able to choose your supermarket eGift card from one of the following food retailers: Sainsbury's, Tesco, Asda, Morrisons, Waitrose or M&S.
- You can access responses to frequently asked questions regarding the government scheme via the following link: https://www.edenred.co.uk/Documents/DfE/DfE_FreeSchoolMeals_ParentCarerFAQspdf

Please note the Department for Education has been made aware that parents are receiving an email saying 'As schools will be closing, if you're entitled to free school meals, please send your bank details. This is a scam. Please do not click on any links or provide any personal details – just delete any such messages.



Qualification and Assessment Updates

We understand that this has been a very stressful time for our Year 11 students who had been working hard to prepare for their final exams. On Friday, Ofqual released their plans following the cancellation of all exams and assessments this Summer. The overriding aim of Ofqual, the government exams regulator, is to be fair to students and to make sure they are not disadvantaged in their progress to sixth form college, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions. As such, this is a summary of the provisions being made.

Schools will be asked to send exam boards two pieces of information for each of the students' subjects, based on what they know about their work and achievements:

- *The grade they believe they were most likely to get if teaching, learning and exams had happened as planned and within each subject, the rank order of students at school, by performance, for each grade. This information will be used to standardise judgements.*
- *Schools will be asked to consider a range of things like classwork and homework; results in assignments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework that might have been done; and general progress during the course.*
- *This information will allow Ofqual, with exam boards, to standardise grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged because their school is more generous or harsh than others when making those judgements. That means the final grade you get could be different from the one your school or college sends to the exam board.*
- *BTEC and vocational exams information is yet to be updated by the exam boards. As soon as this guidance is released, we will get the information to those affected.*

Exam results are expected to be published by the scheduled August exam date but could be earlier. At this time the appeals process will also be outlined. There may be the possibility to 'retake' the exam in the Autumn or following Summer term if the required grade has not been attained. Please **do not** enquire about grades prior to results being released. It is an Ofqual regulation that staff do not discuss these confidential grades and anyone doing so would be in serious breach of this. Please be reassured that the grades students get this summer will look exactly the same as in previous years, and they will have equal status with universities, colleges and employers, to help your child move forward in their lives as planned. Your child should have accepted their college placements by now. 6th form colleges are providing online platforms for pre-course learning so please check their websites regularly. If there is no material available, it is still important your child continues to study and keep a sensible routine in readiness for their next steps. They should access their revision materials, resources and past papers for the subjects they plan to continue and research around the subjects they are planning to start. Our careers advisor, Sarah Moore, from C&K careers is available for any questions and to support apprenticeship applications via email sarah.moore@ckcareers.org.uk.



Work Submissions

- All staff have been massively impressed and proud with the amount of activity our students have been committed to accessing, completing and submitting over the last two weeks and we would like to encourage them to continue their e-learning, so we have come up with some solutions to guide both staff and students to set and complete work in a fair and realistic manner for all parties and very much appreciate all your continued support to ensure they continue learning.
- From Monday the 20.04.2020, staff will set **fortnightly** tasks and these should be submitted by pupils during the two week phase and during school hours before the next tasks are set. This will ensure all students can access all their work and can manage their time around family commitments.
- Year 11 students no longer need to submit work in Google Classroom, however, as stated above they should access their revision materials, resources and past papers for the subjects they plan to continue and research around the subjects they are planning to start in September. Class teachers would still be happy to support any student continuing their studies in that subject, especially in maths and English language. If your child requires further study materials or guidance, please ask them to message their teacher through Google Classrooms after the Easter break.

As mentioned, Ofqual are still awaiting guidance from the exam board regarding BTEC qualifications and currently all systems are on hold. It is vital your child continues to access their Google classroom for these subjects and follows the advice from their teachers.

- Please use the communication route of elearning@newsomehigh.kirklees.sch.uk

Pastoral Support & Communication

- Due to Covid-19 some interim safeguarding guidance has been produced by the school's Safeguarding Team in conjunction with the Government and Local Authority. We have created an addendum to support our existing policy, which will be shared with you via the school website once ratified by the school Governors. This will include key contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputies.
- Staff are continuing to frequently interact with students through a number of forums. The e-learning platform is the main link between student and teacher but our pastoral team is working really hard to liaise with parents/carers and other professionals to ensure students are engaged, healthy and well. We would like to thank all stakeholders for their efforts at this difficult time.
- As we enter another week of social restrictions it is really important to keep our body and minds as active and healthy as possible. To support this, your child has been added to a Wellbeing classroom which will offer emotional support and useful information. Your child is reminded that they are able to contact a member of the Safeguarding team via email at talk@newsomehigh.kirklees.sch.uk. Please note that your child is also able to contact their behaviour for learning coordinator via the wellbeing classroom.



On a final note, we wanted to let you know some positive news. We have donated our safety spectacles from the science department to support the local NHS trust in desperate need of PPE equipment to allow their staff to complete their shifts safely this weekend. We hope this goes a small way to show our gratitude for all the hard work taking place in our community and indeed nation by all our key workers.

Yours faithfully,

Newsome High School Senior Leadership Team