

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

As the end of term is here, I thought it important to write to you and give you an overview of where we are up to as a school within the current crisis and our plans for after the Easter holidays. I know that there will be a lot of anxiety in our community and I want to make sure that we do whatever we can to alleviate that. With this in mind I would firstly like to talk about students working at home.

Over the past two weeks we have set work online and provided paper versions upon request, which has been primarily designed to keep students thinking and their minds active. We intend to continue this approach after Easter, with emphasis on the curriculum content that would have been delivered if the children had been in school; this is particularly relevant to Year 10 students. It is therefore important that your child does access this work, although the primary purpose remains to keep them actively thinking and learning rather than progress through a curriculum in the traditional sense. The reason for this is that the most important thing for everyone at the moment is mental wellbeing and community; a Headteacher recently commented on Twitter, "I ask parents not to worry about progress, that is our job to sort out when children return to school."

So, it is important to get your child to complete the work we are setting as it will be good to keep them engaged in learning activities, which will be of benefit when they return. I know that many of you are anxious about the amount of time that your child spends working so as a guide they should be spending roughly no more than the same amount of time per subject as they would in school, e.g. Year 10 have 4 hours of Maths per week. Due to the nature of the work and individual family circumstances we do understand that this may be difficult for all, but it should be an aim. We will get in touch if we notice that your child isn't accessing any work to see if there is anything that we can do to support them further.

We do not expect students to access ShowMyHomework over Easter, although work is available if you would like to keep them occupied! If for any reason your child has struggled to complete any work over the past two weeks, they could also use the time to catch up. In addition, we have published some activities that staff have suggested for families over the Easter break. You can find this in the News and Events section of our website where we publish our bulletins. I hope that you have a look and find something that will help you pass some time and have some fun.

I am delighted that the Local Authority have offered to continue providing packed lunches for students eligible for Free School Meals during the Easter holidays; we will continue to deliver these via Radar Taxis. Unfortunately, we are no longer able to take additional orders. After Easter we will be adopting the Government voucher scheme and information will be sent to eligible families regarding how this will operate.

We are expecting to hear from OFQUAL this afternoon about the plans for awarding qualifications for Year 11 students. We are expecting this to be an internal and confidential process so whilst we will be able to tell you what the process is, we will not be able to tell you what information we provide to the awarding bodies. Further details will be shared as soon as we have them.

The school remains open during the Easter holidays so please do contact the school office if you have any queries or are in need of support. The office will be open between 9am and 3pm every day, but we

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may not always be there to answer the phone so please do email if you don't get through [jschs.office@ntlp.org.uk](mailto:jschs.office@ntlp.org.uk) .

In the meantime, the most important thing is to stay safe. It is great to hear such wonderful stories from our community with people looking out for one another and providing the support for the most vulnerable at this time. Please do share stories with us via Twitter @johnspenceCHS and on Facebook so we can celebrate how fantastic our community is in the face of such difficult challenges.

Very best wishes from all the staff at John Spence to you and all your family.

Jonathan Heath

Headteacher