



NEWSLETTER

27th March 2020

Year 9 and 10

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Well, as you know, school is effectively closed, apart from for the children whose parents are essential for resolving the crisis and who cannot be left safely at home, or those who are especially vulnerable. I know many of you will be finding this very difficult – though I am also sure that you are doing your very best to keep others in your families and wider community safe, by staying in as much as possible, and maybe helping your parents immensely by helping to entertain or educate your younger siblings – or at least, trying not to annoy them!

In terms of what else is happening, I'm afraid we don't really know in lots of ways. All of you will have been preparing for end of year exams this summer. In addition, Year 9 students were looking forward to receiving their option choices and beginning their GCSEs after May half term. Year 10 on the other hand had the prospect of work experience to look forward to in June/July. Due to current circumstances these two major events will have to be postponed until a later date (updates will follow).

It is our aim to keep your academic progress as current as possible and in order for this to happen we are relying on you to focus at home by logging onto 365 daily and checking in to see what work has been uploaded for your class. You should spend time going through lessons and submitting work by the due dates.

Please communicate with me, your form tutor or directly to your subject teacher by email if you are having any difficulties or if work has not been assigned.

You will receive a weekly phone call from someone at school, checking that you are OK. Please let this person know if you are struggling with anything – the reason that we are doing this is we want to make sure we can help resolve your problems at this really difficult time.

WHAT MIGHT BE WORRYING YOU?

I am sure that many of you will be very worried about your futures, in terms of qualifications and other things... Many of you will also be worried about your families – especially those with underlying health conditions, or those who are vulnerable because of their age.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP YOURSELF?

1. Socialise – safely!

We are social animals – all humans crave contact with other humans: it is who we are! So, at a time when this is impossible to do physically, think about how it could be done virtually. I have explored various different video conferencing sites this weekend, and although it does feel a bit strange, actually it's great to see lots of my friends and be able to chat to them, as if we were all together. Try and work out a time when you can all hang out together. I am sure that you will already know how to do this – can you also help your parents learn the necessary tech, too?

2. Continue to learn

As well as school work, set regularly by your teachers in line with the remote learning document you received electronically on Friday, there are other things you can be doing, to keep your brain cells going, when you get bored of Netflix and Instagram. Trust us, it WILL happen! Take advantage of the online opportunities you have, to learn a new instrument, learn to play chess, Monopoly or Scrabble- even learn a new language. Anything is possible.

3. Be creative

As well as social animals, we are also really creative ones. Many people find the act of creating something really helpful for their mental health – and who knows, it could even lead to an unthought-of career path! Maybe you could use youtube to learn to knit, crochet or sew; write a poem each week with prompts from this website <https://thinkwritten.com/poetry-prompts> ; or use your creativity to invent new and delicious meals from the rather random ingredients in the cupboard (see #JackMonroesLockdownLarder on Twitter for inspiration!)....

4. Take comfort in the world outside

Although it is a very different spring for us humans, it is absolutely business as normal for the natural world. Indeed, many parts of the world are showing wonderful signs of recovery from human interference already – wildlife is returning to the waters of Venice, and carbon emissions have been halved over some cities, because of the lack of “normal” human activity. If you can get outside safely (by yourself, and as long as no-one in your family has any symptoms), then take a look at what is growing, listen out for the birds, and revel in the glory that is the natural world.

5. Be active

This website could be helpful for all of us <https://www.sportengland.org/news/how-stay-active-while-youre-home> – and again, as mentioned above, many of your parents might not feel confident using technology in this sort of way, or feel embarrassed or self-conscious about exercising. Can you help them?

OVER TO YOU?

We will be sending out something like this every week – but want to include some stuff from you, too, so it is not all just us going on in a boring, boomer sort of a way. So, let us know what is helping you out, or what you would like to celebrate.

This week, I would like to celebrate participation of the Year 9s with WE.org. One group participated in City Hall Social Integration Youth Summit on 17th January and managed to greet the Mayor himself, Sadiq Khan. The group of seven took part in a focus group and debate. They were praised for their participation and strong opinions. Read all about the day:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/city-hall-blog/youth-summit-social-integration>

The second group- 28 in all- took part in the fabulous WE Day and the SSE Arena in Wembley. This took place on 4th March. Read all about it by following this link:

<https://www.we.org/en-GB/our-work/we-day/we-day-events/we-day-uk>

Suffice to say, the year 9 students behaviour and participation were a credit to the school, their families and themselves. We look forward to attending again next year.

In year 10 we should celebrate two main event which took place in the last weeks of school and which have been 'put on hold' until a future date:

- Languages Leaders took a group of year 10s into local primary schools in order to deliver French and German lessons to primary school students. By all accounts we have produced a fine group of young MFL teachers in the making.

<http://www.williamellis.camden.sch.uk/news/?pid=3&nid=1&storyid=161>

- The WES Apprentice competition had just been gathering pace only to be cut short prematurely- However it was a definite hit while it lasted. A huge thank you to ~~Mr~~ Lord Harris for spending time getting the ball rolling. We done to all participants.

STUDENTS PLEASE BE REMINDED TO KEEP LOOKING AT THE WES AND LASWAP WEBSITES FOR UPDATES...

Any questions not answered on these websites? Email me!

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Stay safe – and #spreadthelovenotthevirus!