



Marden High School

Wednesday 25th March 2020

Dear All,

We are now into day 3 of our new set up, and I hope that you are all managing to settle into new routines and that students are accessing their home learning without too many issues. I'm sure that the importance of routine is becoming very clear to us all. Students should remember that this time has the potential for developing self discipline, a key skill for future study and work. However, it can take a little time to get into a routine so don't worry if it doesn't work straight away. Keep working at it because persistence and consistency will definitely pay off.

This is a good opportunity for children to develop their independent learning skills, but we should still be aware of them not spending hours on end in their rooms searching the internet or using social media unsupervised. It is only natural that people will be anxious from time to time, and there will be arguments and tension at times. It's better to discuss any worries that family members may have about the current crisis, and of course, we are always here to support - just contact us in the usual way and the most appropriate member of staff will get back to you if they are not available immediately.

It's a good idea to keep classmates and members of clubs like scouts, football teams and music groups in touch via Skype, FaceTime, Zoom or other video-conferencing services. This will allow them to share details of their day and play games. We're all going to have to think creatively about keeping children connected to their peer groups. Kerplunk won't work on Skype, but Cluedo or Monopoly might.

It is also important to consciously focus on the positive as far as possible, in particular given the nature of the news headlines published every few hours. It is perhaps a cliché, but in the face of adversity often we find people presenting the best of humanity, and there is plenty of news around celebrating this. Here is a good example:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-51963446>

In this vein, I would like to thank East Coast taxis who have been very generous stepping up to the plate in taking work to students' homes free of charge.

Whilst we are in very different time from normal, we would like to keep some elements of our school life the same, so over the next few weeks you will see various activities and events appearing on the school website including the Work of the Week Headteachers Award, information on reports, our end of term newsletter, and various House competitions.

I continue to work with colleagues at North Tyneside Local Authority to plan for provision for during the Easter holidays and the start of the summer term, and as soon as I have a firm idea of what that will look like I will let everyone know.

This year's summer exam series, including A levels, GCSEs and other qualifications, have been cancelled as we fight to stop the spread of coronavirus. But beware. Yes, the exams may be cancelled but there is still a need for teachers to assess students' work ongoing as grades will need to be submitted by teachers working alongside exam boards. In short, those students who continue to focus and work hard on what their teachers set them will achieve grades closer to their targets than students who may decide they no longer need to work just because they are not going to school each day

I would like to thank the multitude of parents who have either called or sent emails to thank Marden staff for everything they have been doing and continue to do in providing care and learning for the students in very challenging circumstances. Those messages are much appreciated by all of us, and are a reflection of the great team - staff, students, parents - that we are.

Take care and look after each other.



Mr M. Snape
Head Teacher