

1st April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

I hope that this letter finds you and your family well and finding the positives in the social distancing measures in place.

I also hope that the first couple of weeks of students learning at home is going well. It is the case that all students will have work set for all the lessons they would usually have that day using our Google Classroom platform. Some parents have let us know that they are not able to access these tasks and we have taken action appropriately, so please do keep in touch and report any concerns by email.

Students who receive free school meals will continue to receive a weekly allowance for this using the same method of supermarket vouchers that we have been using so far. I am pleased to say that we are supporting parents during these difficult times by also providing these vouchers through the Easter holiday.

We still do not have the final detail of how our current year 11 students will be assessed and then awarded with a grade for their examined subjects. When we know this, we will alert the relevant parents.

I would like to take the opportunity to express the importance of the tasks that are being set for students to complete at home. We still have absolutely no idea how long schools will be closed for and it is vitally important that students do not miss out on huge chunks of time in their learning. We simply do not have enough space in our curriculum time at school to catch up on any chunks of time that the students have missed. The curriculum time is already stretched to capacity with the amount that has to be covered during the GCSE or Btec courses and the Key Stage 3 curriculum is full also. Therefore, I need to stress that this work being set for students is compulsory and will not be repeated when the term time in school begins again. Upon school life returning to normal, the Key Stage 4 students will be working towards their exams which are graded against every other student in the country taking the same exam - for this reason alone, we cannot afford to be behind the work that other students are completing at home - the consequences of not completing work now will affect the exam outcomes and indeed the future life chances of our students.

Please take the time daily to ask your child what work they have completed and even quiz them on the contents. Teachers are just at the other end of emails to answer any questions you or your child has about the work and the year teams will make contact regularly.

HDHS is a Reading School and I cannot emphasize enough how important it is that your child is reading regularly. There are book suggestions on our website, but reading of any materials in the home is vitally important.

We are also updating our Facebook page regularly, to keep you informed of any additional learning opportunities that become available for our students during this time.

Please also pay close attention to what your child is doing online. The risks are very much still there and I would encourage you to robustly and regularly check the sites your child visits and scrutinise any devices they are using.

There is a lot of support available to keep your child safe online. Below are some useful links to help:

- Thinkyouknow (advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online)
- Internet matters (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- Parent info (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- LGfL (support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online)
- Net-aware (support for parents and carers from the NSPCC)

As ever you are most welcome to contact a member of the school's safeguarding team if you have any concerns or queries. Please note: the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr Loten and the Deputy Designated Lead is Mrs Prior. Concerns can also be raised via the "Reporting an Issue" button (<https://swgflwhisper.org.uk/report/har4>) at the bottom of our school webpage.

Thank you for your support during these difficult times

**Kate Finch**  
**Headteacher**