

Dear Parents and Carers

As we complete our 4<sup>th</sup> week of 'learning from home' and the 6<sup>th</sup> week of lockdown, I have been reflecting on the way that our school community has pulled together to support each other and the acts of kindness of our students and staff that fill me with pride. Annabelle of Year 7 who has painted beautiful rocks to be given to hospital patients as part of the 'Comfort Rocks' challenge; Joe in Year 7 who has baked amazing rainbow cakes to share with his neighbours during the Thursday night 'Clap for our Carers'; our DT department supported by our learning support team who are working every day to produce potentially life-saving visors for front-line staff; our pastoral team who are regularly checking in with families to make sure that everyone is 'ok'; our teachers who are supporting children to access learning from home; our staff who are coordinating and supporting the childcare provision for key workers; our team of staff who are meticulously planning a fantastic but very different transition programme for the students who are joining us in September.... the list is endless.

When future generations look back at these times, they will learn how communities pulled together in unprecedented times to stand outside their houses and applaud the NHS on a Thursday evening, raised funds for worthy causes, looked out for their neighbours and the elderly who needed help with shopping or collecting prescriptions and stayed at home to support the NHS. As we plan for our return to school, whenever that may be, we will be considering ways to capture this time in history.

### **Keeping Connected**

Today will see the launch of our new Keeping Connected bulletin especially for students. This publication will contain information to support learning from home along with news from staff and other students. We will be encouraging students to share ideas for keeping occupied and connected remotely with friends and family. This week our followers on Instagram @nestonhighofficial has increased to over 1060 as we share ideas and good news stories. This week's Instagram posts include a 'Keepie Uppie' challenge from the PE department, demonstrated by Mr Blakemore and Mr Hiscott, a special message from our learning support team, ultimate noughts and crosses, reading millionaires and 'join our sunflower competition'.

### **Teams update**

We are really pleased to see that so many children are engaging with their classes through Teams, each day we can see the numbers accessing their online learning growing.

Guidance documents for Teams for parents and students can be accessed through the school website in the [Remote Learning](#) section. Mr Caldwell has also set up a folder in Year Group Teams 'SP: All Students' where he will be posting regular 'Top tips for using Teams' and all the general Teams guides.

Work assigned to students by teachers will have a 'due by' date, please ensure your children look at this information as some work has been set that will take longer to complete and has a 'turn in' date of up to 2 weeks. We certainly don't want students to feel overwhelmed by the amount of work that they have been allocated.

### **Loan Laptops**

We still have laptops available for students to borrow, if you wish to use one of the school laptops please email [admin@nestonhigh.com](mailto:admin@nestonhigh.com) and we will arrange a suitable time for you to call and collect.

### **Support for Families**

We are very aware that home circumstances are different for everyone and some families are having a particularly challenging time now, meaning that some children will be finding it difficult or not possible to engage with school. Please contact your child's form tutor if you need extra support or if, due to home circumstances, your child is unable to engage as fully as they might usually.

Our team of pastoral support staff are keeping in contact with many families on a regular basis by telephone. If you need to speak to anyone in the pastoral team during the school closure for support or guidance please email [admin@nestonhigh.com](mailto:admin@nestonhigh.com) giving your name, contact telephone number and child's name and member of the pastoral team will contact you. If you have a safeguarding concern, there are contact details and guidance on our school website '[Safeguarding Information during School Closure](#)'.

Free school meals - If your situation has changed and you wish to apply for free school meals you can apply online using the following link [Free School Meals Application](#).

### **Parent checklist for developing routines**

The EEF (Education Endowment Foundation) have produced a parental checklist for developing routines with their children. This is a useful document that focuses on a child's wellbeing as well as their education.

A link to the checklist can be found [here](#)

[Video version](#) of the checklist.

### **Home Learning Tip of the Week!!**

One of the things we are looking at as a school is how we can best support our pupils in retrieving information in order to help them remember things they have learnt.

As parents currently working with your children at home, we thought it may be helpful to share a tip a week for supporting them with this. Each week we will give you a question to ask your children which will help them with remembering the content they have covered in school and at home.

This week's question is.... (a simple one to start with!)

**'What did you learn yesterday?'**

This will help as learning has suddenly gone from asking about today (and moving on) to asking about yesterday and bringing information back to mind!

Over the next few weeks Miss Robinson will be putting together more ideas and resources to share with parents and pupils to help them with independent learning at home during this time.

### **The Skills Toolkit**

And finally, learning isn't just for our children .... The government have launched a free online learning platform to develop workplace skills while people are staying at home. The platform gives adults access to free digital and numeracy courses to help build up skills to boost job prospects and progress in work. [The Skills Toolkit](#)

Digital and numeracy skills are amongst those that are most sought after by employers and can help you progress in work and boost your job prospects. Digital skills can be anything from using social media and staying safe online to coding, programming or digital marketing.

You can choose from a selection of high-quality courses put together in collaboration with experts. Find a level and time to study that's right for you. [The Skills Toolkit](#) makes it easy for you to boost your skills.

Until next week, stay safe

K Simpson  
Headteacher