



Oastlers School

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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you are all continuing to keep safe and well during what is a complex and worrying period and all the uncertainty surrounding COVID-19. I, like you, await the government's announcement if our local restrictions will be even tighter next week as are many northern towns and cities.

I am in awe of the level of support and encouragement I am receiving from you when we are asking you to help us keep any threat of the spread of the virus out of school and indeed any virus entering the school so that we can continue to function.

It's been a bit unsettled this week, I think our learner are finding the new 'normal' in school tough, it is a different place and I know our children simply do not cope with change of routines, people, even the layout of the school but we are managing and the usual lessons are taking place and indeed learning is taking place.

Other updates:

Next week the whole school will be investigating aspects of Black History in support of 'Black History Month'. Learners will be exploring black scientists, author's, historical figures who have changed the course of history, African art, influential musicians, movie stars, cooking, racism and what we can do about it, poster designs, famous sportsmen and women, civil rights, factual documentaries, migration and much more. I think you will be pleased at the breadth of study that I hope will stimulate reflective thinking.

I have been keeping a close eye on the debate surrounding 2021 examinations and am not clear what the government will decide – examination or another year of teacher assessment? I believe the teacher assessment was in fact a perfectly reliable and honest approach so would not be unhappy if this was the way forward again next year at all. The disruption of what is COVID-19 continues so we need to be better prepared next year, whatever the decision.

I am sure you will be aware that remote learning is to be in place in the event of a school closure or even for those who may self-isolating. We have further developed our VLE to ensure there are plenty of learning resources available for children to access from home and we are developing remote 'live' lessons via TEAMS technology so that for those who have internet access, your son/daughter may be able to access face to face teaching via the computer. For those who do not have internet access or indeed for children who prefer not to work in this way we are preparing work packages in paper form so they can be busy working through subjects in a more traditional sense. Either way, we are keen to ensure learning will continue when not in school.

I am aware that there are discussions about a possible 'circuit breaker' which means the government may announce that school will close for an additional week on October. This has not been agreed as yet, please wait until you are formally notified about this despite the huge media interest.

Our KS4 learners have enjoyed remote sessions with a number of employer's supporting all things careers. Despite COVID-19, our learners still need to know about career opportunities and options, apprenticeships and more so that agenda does not stand still.

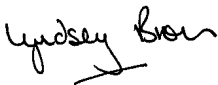
We have begun to hold very small daily gatherings for individual year groups because we know how much our learners are missing this incredibly important part of their day. There will be a whole school 'assembly' on Monday that is recorded and viewed in the classrooms via technology! A different way of doing an assembly! Tuesday Y9 will meet in the small hall, Wednesday Y10, Thursday Y11 and sixth form and Friday Y7 and Y8. Churchill will decide if they would like their own or to join a small group. It's different, but we are trying to somehow bring about some form of previous normality, ensuring those valuable messages and shared experiences are not lost.

Finally, I have been informed that the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) are conducting random school audits. We have not heard from them as yet but I will let you know if we do and the outcome of any visit to see if our risk assessment and COVID-19 measures have proven to be robust. I would welcome such a visit.

I have enclosed a document that you may find useful with numerous sources of support that you might find useful.

Have a restful weekend keeping safe and well.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lyndsey Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Lyndsey Brown
Headteacher