

**24/4/20**

## **Dear Parents, Carers, Students, Staff and Friends of the School.**

I hesitate to say welcome back but I do so in an attempt to compartmentalise between the Easter holiday and the start of the Summer term. I hope that this letter finds each of you in good health and in good spirits.

Staff at Notre Dame, like much of the UK public, have been increasingly utilising video calls to stay in touch and maintain a sense of community. Before the Easter break, we were lucky enough to call over 120 of the staff together, and as part of the meeting we heard from Father Sean. His prayer, reflection and blessing to staff focussed on Psalm 23, which provided much comfort to many of us. It may continue to be a comfort for the community over this period of uncertainty.

*'The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit...'*

Each of us no doubt looks forward to the green pastures and restful waters of a post lock down Britain, Europe and wider World.

Father Sean also recorded an Easter video message for all Notre Dame students. If students haven't had a chance to have look, please follow this [link](#) . Mr Savage's weekly pebble, which can be accessed through the weekly theme google classroom, provides nourishment for the mind and spirit and links nicely with much of Father Sean's work.

One of the frustrations for everyone in the community are the levels of 'unknown'. There are many questions posed that staff at Notre Dame simply cannot answer. There are many 'answers' to be found in the media and social media that simply are not factual and may contribute to fear or provide false hope. We will endeavour to provide factual information as it arises. We will continue to be in touch with Year 11 and Year 13 regarding the processes being followed to award grades.

As per my previous communication, please use the hyperlinks below to read up on anything of interest to you and your family and ignore that which isn't relevant.

- [Supporting Home Learning](#)
- [Additional Resources to Support Home Learning](#)
- [Update on PPE Production at Notre Dame](#)
- [Wellbeing/Mental Health Support](#)
- [General Safeguarding Concerns – Contact](#)
- [Awarding Grades for GCSE and A-Level Candidates: Summer 2020](#)
- [Free School Meals](#)

Stay safe and well.

Best Wishes,

Tom Pinnington.

## **Supporting Home Learning**

From my own brief experience, but perhaps more to the point, my wife's experience of supporting home learning with our own children (aged 4 and 6), I am very aware that this is not an easy process for many families. There are news reports regarding the low levels of engagement from students at a national level. In contrast, we have probably all heard about how other families seem to be doing it perfectly, this in itself can create feelings of inadequacy.

I am pleased that many of our students are self-motivated and many doing their best under very difficult circumstances. I certainly feel that parents and carers are very much the facilitators to this process and it is in the students' hands to make the best of it and take control of the process.

The Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF), who fund the Notre Dame Research School have created a handy checklist that may support students' daily routines. It can be found by clicking [here](#). Students may utilise this as part of their own self regulation or in conjunction with you as parents and carers to stimulate a conversation on how their day has been.

Staff are in the process of checking engagement within the various google classrooms and we will contact families to support them as we deem necessary. If, however, you are concerned about your child/young person's levels of engagement, please contact their teachers (if it is about one subject) or their Head of Year (if it is about multiple subjects).

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## **Additional Resources to Support Remote Learning**

It is important that students continue to prioritise and complete the work set by Notre Dame so that they have completed the curriculum in its logical order.

That said, there are two well-publicised additional resources that students and families may wish to consider to supplement the work provided by Notre Dame. These tools are for students in reception through to year 10.

**BBC Bitesize**, which has been augmented with new content and now provides daily lessons

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons>

**Oak National Academy**, from the Department for Education, similarly has daily lessons or can be searched by subject

<https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom>

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## **Update on PPE production at Notre Dame**

Positive news stories are crucial at such a time and I'm really proud of how Notre Dame's technology team and the wider staff are contributing to the valiant efforts to supply the NHS with PPE.

Rachel Holden and Jane Buck have been leading the charge using 3D printers and joining forces with Hexatomic, a local engineering company. Staff have been producing 3D visor shield frames, which are being delivered on a weekly basis to the UEA who then add the visor shields and pass them on to

the NNUH. So far, the school has produced over 500 frames and we are now moving into producing 'Ear Comfort Bands' for mask wearing.

The school is investing in another 3D printer to support this work, which will become a fantastic resource for our students upon return. This is an example of collaborative community action, with the Royal College of Midwives supplying the school with the plastic filament to ensure production continues.

In addition to printing components for PPE, some of the staff across Notre Dame have also been busy sewing for the NHS and other key workers. This has included making scrubs, face masks, uniform wash bags and headbands. Many staff and members of the community have also contributed to the effort by donating fabrics such as bed sheets, duvet covers and pillow cases. We thank all those involved.

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### **Well Being/Mental Health Support**

We are acutely aware of the burden that isolation places on our young people.

MAP, an organisation that Notre Dame has worked closely with, continues to offer support for 11 to 25 year olds across Norfolk. They can be contacted between 10.30am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday on 08000744454 or via email on [advice@map.uk.net](mailto:advice@map.uk.net)

The attached 'Norwich Bulletin' provides further details regarding MAP and other support groups for children, young adults and adults.

Ellie Johnston the school SEMH Practitioner is continuing to provide mentoring and support to some of our pupils and their families. If other pupils and families within our school community are finding themselves in need of support it may be possible for Ellie or one of her team to start work with your family - for more information about this service please contact Dr Stevenson or a member of the pastoral team.

Students, parents and carers should also remember that all staff, including the pastoral team, are checking their emails regularly and are happy to support any concerns over our young people's wellbeing.

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### **General Safeguarding Concerns – Contact**

As a reminder... if parents/carers or students have any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a Notre Dame student the safeguarding contact number remains the same:

Parents/carers with any safeguarding concerns can contact David Butters DSL or Shirley Stevenson ADSL on 07771812227 or email [dbutters@ndhs.org.uk](mailto:dbutters@ndhs.org.uk) or [sstevenson@ndhs.org.uk](mailto:sstevenson@ndhs.org.uk) - Please note this mobile phone number is for SAFEGUARDING concerns only. Parents/Carers can also contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on 0344 800 8020

Norfolk County Council is calling on those with concerns about the safety of a child to get in touch as part of a new campaign – [See Something, Hear Something, Say Something](#).

The campaign, backed by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership, is calling on communities to help keep Norfolk's children safe. It is asking for everyone that might still be seeing or hearing children to look out for them. The message is See Something, Hear Something, Say Something. If something doesn't seem right and if you feel a child or young person may need help you can contact the council on 0344 800 80 20.

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### **Awarding Grades for GCSE and A level Candidates: Summer 2020**

As a reminder the following links should be read in detail.

- Notre Dame guidance to students and parents [click here](#)
- Ofqual letter and FAQs [click here](#)
- Ofqual Guidance for teachers, students, parents and carers [click here](#)

We have also clarified that the centre will not be issuing any marks to students for any NEA, which formed part of the cancelled exam. We are following the Ofqual requirements as set out in the communications.

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### **Free School Meals**

We are pleased to announce that the National voucher scheme for those eligible for free school meals is now up and running through Edenred, and families should have received their first vouchers ready to be redeemed against their preferred supermarkets. An email has been sent to all parents/carers of those children eligible for free school meals which contains a document to assist with downloading and accessing vouchers. This document can also be found on the Covid 19 info page. Please contact [office@ndhs.org.uk](mailto:office@ndhs.org.uk) if you have any questions or queries about the vouchers.

The DFE have also temporarily extended free school meals eligibility to include some groups who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). Please check the updated guidance on our Covid 19 info page by clicking [here](#).

We are still awaiting government guidance on provision of electronic equipment to support home learning for eligible students and we will update you in due course

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