



Kings Langley School – Weekly Update 5

Dear Parent

Well done to all families, you are doing a great job working with your Son/Daughter in your own home school setting. I have enjoyed driving into work each day seeing the mock Ofsted registered signs popping up in home windows and reading the mock Ofsted Home school reports being sent into us to bring some humour to the situation of home schooling:

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/teachers-ofsted-report-home-schooling-21927681>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52458237>

As a school when we first heard of potential closures then the subsequent closure of schools, we completed a huge amount of research on how best to ensure as a community we could maintain a sustainable experience for all parties. To sum it up we as a school, saw this as a marathon and not a sprint, and we are 4 weeks into this marathon. The research is clear, build up provision and not down, have a varied diet of different resources that build with your provision and finally give options to families and your staff to accommodate individual circumstances. It has been interesting this week reading newsletters from other schools who went out as a sprint now needing to pull back and review their provision due to students and staff struggling to maintain the demands of being online all day. It has also been interesting to read a number of secondary schools stating, they are not offering any virtual lessons. As a school we will grow our provision each week as part of a varied diet of learning activities that includes our own virtual lessons and those from the National Oak Academy: <https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom>. As of this week, 2 million parents and students have used this platform to gain virtual lessons as part of their schedule. I also wanted to say a well done this week to Year 12 again but also Year 10 who had their first Zoom lessons in Maths and English. It is a testament to the students and staff on how smoothly they have transitioned into this way of learning, I know Humanities will be following next week with Year 10 Zoom lessons.

As I know from parental feedback, a weekly newsletter from myself has been incredibly useful for families, as a one stop shop of information. However, I am relieved to announce that from this week, we will have our normal weekly school newsletter back up and running fully. This will include all the good news stories, student awards and recognition along with support on mental health and wellbeing. I will continue to update each week on important messages and announcements when necessary, which I hope parents continue to appreciate. Mrs Inskipp will continue to send out her weekly updates and Pastoral Leaders will continue to send out year group letters when needed. I have noted how some schools have shut down their main office and telephones, we have not and have one person in each day staffing the phones, so please bear with us during this time if you do call the school.

I have heard on the grapevine, my example of the History project attached to the newsletter last week, has come with some questions or concerns. "Does he expect us as parents to print this out?" The answer is no. As said in the last newsletter, this was just an example of work that will be set on SMHW as longer term projects, enabling students to work at their own pace and has all the information in one place in terms of support and activities. This work/project will be posted on our virtual platform and students can annotate the document electronically and then submit to their

individual teacher. This way no more printing for parents if your child can work on the activity online. Students can then work through at their own pace and get support via the chat function on our platform or Zoom tutorials.

Community Spirit/Creative use of Time

It has been great to celebrate the first students who are doing wonderful things with their time. Please keep them coming in to individual Heads of Year.

Please send your stories, pictures or news to the correct email below:

Year 7 - harveys@kls.herts.sch.uk

Year 8 - jacksona@kls.herts.sch.uk

Year 9 - afilakaa@kls.herts.sch.uk

Year 10 - thomasc@kls.herts.sch.uk

Year 11 - raia@kls.herts.sch.uk

Years 12/13 - wrightj@kls.herts.sch.uk

These will move to the Newsletter as of next week.

Healing Hands-Helping the NHS to heal

Olivia (10C) has been part of a dedicated team that are helping NHS workers, patients and families during this difficult time. Helping Hands started by collecting hand and face creams for NHS staff to help combat the effects of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Helping Hands have also used their Facebook page to coordinate the collection and delivery of handmade hearts to end of life and COVID-19 patients in multiple hospitals (Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Stoke Mandeville). Families are able to send a heart to their loved ones, accompanied by a poem, when they are unable to see them personally.

Olivia and the team have been incredibly busy as this has now been rolled out across the entire West Herts NHS. Olivia has been pairing, sealing and dating the hearts so they are safe to use. Pictured is Olivia with the latest batch of well over 100 hearts that were donated by people in the local area.

Please visit their Facebook page to explore or get involved with the brilliant work that Healing Hands are doing: www.facebook.com/HealingHandsNHS/



Taylor

He and his younger brother have made birthday cards for Captain Tom for his 100th birthday. Taylor enclosed a letter telling him about his great grandad also a war veteran who would have also celebrated his 100th birthday. This was the boy's idea and I know parents and as a school we are very proud of their decisions to show kindness during these unprecedented times



Vinnie

Vinnie, has been fundraising for West Herts Hospitals, Watford, Hemel and St Albans.

“A few weeks back he came bounding out into the garden having done some spinning (cycle spinning) and said "we should really do something to help, we are here enjoying the beautiful weather and so many are sick', then he suggested kicking off an ice bucket challenge. So, he did and to date £140 has been raised plus an additional £30 in Gift Aid”.

We and parents are also proud of him and his actions. Thank you to all those who have supported and taken part.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tara-vincent3>

Also since having been on lock down, Vinnie has had time to focus on photography which he thoroughly enjoys and was able to explore more through the 30 day Art Challenge set by the school. He's asked for a camera for his birthday which he's eager to capture more of his time in 'lockdown' on.



Parent comments and praise please keep them coming in via admin@kls.herts.sch.uk

To say these keep staff going at the moment is an understatement. I know staff are working round the clock on a number of things to support your child whether that is Year 11 and 13 marking to ensure a good evidence base to generate an accurate GCSE or A level grade, making calls, running Zoom lessons, designing new resources to support students, running the Kings Langley site for key workers and vulnerable children, making PPE equipment, driving minibuses to supply food and medical products or just supporting their own families and friends in need during this time to name but a few. So please keep them coming into the email address above.

“I would like to say thank you so much to all the teachers that are setting the work and using messaging to send help, feedback and praise. It's meant so much to him and us a parents”

“Thank you for all your hard work behind the scenes and keeping us parents regularly updated during this time”.

“Thank you so much for your weekly letter to parents, the level of information is exceptional and it has really helped us in these early stages of lockdown”

"It's great to hear about the next steps the school is working on to increase support with home learning for the students.

XXX has been great at getting on with her work, however she was unaware about submitting her work on the SMHW app, so it was really useful to receive some information on this. I have sat with her this morning to submit all her work from last week.

I also received a call from Mr Annett this morning and it was great to have feedback from XXX teachers that she's doing really well with her work and it was a good confidence booster for her also".

Just wanted to say that she is finding all the home learning easy to follow and it's keeping her really busy so thank you! We all appreciate the work KLS is doing to keep the children going during the lockdown. Hopefully things will get back to normal (or some kind of new normal!) soon.

Music Lessons:

A large number of students at the school receive additional music lessons through the Herts Music Service. The Hertfordshire Music Service (HMS) is pleased to announce that existing pupils can now continue their instrumental and vocal lessons online with our fantastic team of teachers.

The development of a brand new partnership with Musictutors.co.uk, an online learning platform specifically designed for delivering music lessons will mean pupils continue to receive excellent music tuition whilst school restrictions are in place due to COVID-19.

The first lessons to start online will be individual lessons, followed closely by shared and then group lessons. Please find attached letter to explain the process.

Year 11 - Message from the Sixth Form Team

We are looking forward to welcoming our new students into the Sixth Form in September. We have moved forward our Induction Process and will be contacting you very soon to tell you where you can find Bridging Work for the subjects the students would like to take at A Level. This work is aimed at helping them to get a feel for study in the different subject areas and should also give them a chance to get back into the academic swing of things. We are also working on organising Induction Lessons through Zoom and other internet platforms which will hopefully help them to experience what the lessons will be like in the Sixth Form. More on these developments to follow.

We are also trying to get to know the students and have asked them to complete a questionnaire for us about such things as their future aspirations and friendships. Most students have been quick to respond, and we are really starting to get to know the students better, despite not being able to do our normal interviews. If you haven't completed this yet, please send it in as soon as possible. We will also be contacting many of you in person to help with this process. These are unprecedented times and we would want to keep reassuring you that current circumstances will be considered and entry requirements into the Sixth Form will be adjusted to account for these strange times. We will consider all applicants individually and be flexible in our approach.

Year 12 - Message from the Sixth Form Team

The students in Year 12 are continuing to astound us with their resilience and diligence. They have risen to the challenge of home-working and are embracing Show my Homework, Zoom and the variety of other methods staff are using to engage with them whilst we can't all be together. We are going to be sending out a short survey to students this week asking for feedback on the experience of working at home and interactive lessons. We will then follow this up with a survey for parents. If you could please complete these for us, we would be very grateful as it would help us to put together an overview of the whole experience so far. We are trying to keep improving what we are doing, and your feedback would help us tremendously. We would love to know the positives as well

as any negatives and would also like to hear about what you have all been doing to manage the 'home schooling' experience.

These are strange days and we know, through our communication with all the students, that they are missing school life: the routines, the work but most importantly, their peers and the staff. Schools are about people and not being able to interact normally has been hard for us all. We would like you to know that we are still here and if any student needs support or a parent would like advice, please contact the Sixth Form team at our email address: 6form@kls.herts.sch.uk

Year 13 - Message from the Sixth Form Team

We are all still missing Year 13 and I am sure that they are still missing us – despite what they might say! Once we are open again, we hope to be able to work with the students to organise a proper send-off for Year 13. For now, though, we would love to keep hearing from you to tell us what you are doing to use the time you now have on your hands.

We would also like to know if any of the suggestions we sent out to you have been of any use? Just as a reminder, here are some of the highlights below:

- Unifrog – www.unifrog.org which provides access to MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses). All Year 13 students should have a log in for this site. There are thousands of courses on topics ranging from Animal Science and Anthropology to Public Health, Maths Modelling and Sport (any many more). Courses are often available on demand, so you can start them at a time to suit you. They take from a few hours to weeks to complete depending on the course and some are certificated, so you would have evidence of completing them and the qualification can be added to your CV.
- Learn sign language – www.british-sign.co.uk . [British Sign Language are currently operating a 'pay what you can' system for their courses.](#)
- Learn to touch type – could be considered old fashioned but improving your typing speed and accuracy could be helpful. You could try www.typingclub.com
- www.typingstudy.com both of which should be free.
- Learn a programming language – for example some of the courses on Code Academy are free. There are numerous other sites online offering courses in programming.
- Future Learn - <https://www.futurelearn.com/> for online courses in Business, Creative Arts & Media, Politics and Society, Literature, Health & Medicine, Law, Study Skills, Psychology and Mental Health.
- Volunteering – if you are over 18, you could be eligible to volunteer during the current crisis.

Mindfulness Self Care

Many young people and their families may be feeling anxious and worried during this period of school closure. It can feel scary and isolating, but you are not alone. We want students to remember that it is just as important to take care of your mental health as it is your physical health. There are many ways that we can take care of ourselves such as eating well, getting enough sleep, talking to someone you trust, writing a journal or learning a new skill. Beyond this, we encourage students to empower themselves with self-help strategies that will help and support them as an individual.

We're all different and different things work for different people.



I have highlighted in each Newsletter various options available for families and this week I would like to introduce The Anna Freud website below, which has a great section for young people on self-care which is full of ideas and activities. This resource has been developed based upon extensive research from over 100 papers and 900 individual studies.

<https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/>

Education Endowment Foundation research and help on home schooling:

We work closely with the Education Endowment Foundation as a school with Mark Rowland to bring the best evidence to bear in providing education. The EEF have produced the following guide to support parents with establishing routines for learning at home:

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/covid-19-resources/support-resources-to-share-with-parents/>

A Message from Herts County Council

Over 9,500 volunteers have been recruited to help vulnerable people in Herts identified as being in the extremely vulnerable category. Residents who are self-isolating and in need of support can visit www.hertshelp.net, email: info@hertshelp.net or phone HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044. Anyone currently using a social care service should expect that to continue, however they should speak to their care provider first or call on 0300 1234042 or check www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/serviceupdate for updates.

If your organisation needs help you can visit www.thvolunteering.org.uk/ organisations and complete the online form to help determine how volunteers might be best able to support you. If you would like to contribute making PPE, the organisations coordinating the county's response have created an online guide www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/covid19ppe to help ensure that any Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) offered meets the necessary standards to keep people safe.

Once again well done all parents who are working with their child to support their learning experience. I know from personal experience the balancing act of home school and life is difficult.

Mr D. Fisher
Headteacher