

Parental Update on 12th February 2021

Updates this week: *Thoughts on the half term; SEND Coffee Morning; Update on Remote Learning; Manchester United food parcels and supporting families; Year 7 parent evening feedback; parent governor vacancy; half term contact tracing for children who have been in school; PE and Dance physical sessions; Dance workshop; Golden Ticket winner; Half term filler: Writing competitions; Safer Internet Day and resources*

Resources at foot of update: Contacting us; confirmed school dates for 21/22 school year; mental health resources; reminders to support reading at home

As you'd expect, there are a lot of notices today as we round off the half term ...

It's with a **strange feeling of both satisfaction and frustration that we once again reach half term**: a period in which there have been no "normal" days. And yet we have all achieved so much in learning under extraordinary circumstances. **Thanks to our young people, parents and carers and all of the Werneth staff team** who have made the extraordinary national situation as "normal" as it can be. We know how hard you have all worked. We now look forward to a situation where hopefully at least some form of in-school provision can return - probably gradually - before Easter.

We miss you and we want to see you back in school. Thank you to the many young people who have returned my emails when I have congratulated them over the last fortnight: it's great to hear that you are all looking forward to being back in school with your friends and teachers. Hopefully not too much longer to go now!

SEND Virtual Coffee Morning: We have all been feeling the pressures of the latest lockdown. Sometimes we can find that having a brew and talking through our experiences can be of some comfort. Therefore, the SEND department are going to be hosting a couple of SEND virtual parental coffee mornings when we return after half term. This will be an informal virtual drop in session where you will have an opportunity to chat with the SENCO, support staff, and other parents about how things are going. You'll have a chance to share some ideas about how to support your children whilst they are working from home, and talk about ways we might be able to support you further.

The sessions will be as follows:

- **Thursday 25th February, 12:00 for years 9, 10 and 11**
- **Thursday 4th March, 2pm for years 7 and 8**

If you would like an invite to one of the virtual sessions, please contact Sara Burke, the SENCO, via email at sara.burke@wernethschool.com

An update on remote learning: Following a recent survey of our students, you may see that we are starting to use more Meet lessons so that your child can interact in a way that they say 'feels more like a normal lesson'. We recognise that not everyone is able to log on to their lessons at their timetabled time though so from Monday 22nd February we will be recording the Google Meets and uploading them to the Google Classroom streams so that students can access the teacher instructions at any time. They will also act as valuable revision materials for students to access. We will also be offering the opportunity in KS4 Dance and Drama lessons for students to participate in live lessons with their cameras on. This is so that their teachers are better able to feed back on student's work but will be optional. If your child is taking part with their camera on they should ensure no other family members are visible on the screen. You may wish for your son/daughter to

disable their camera if they are in a live lesson and do not want their faces to be shown. Students must also be suitably dressed to appear on a live stream. All other lessons will continue to take place with an expectation of cameras turned off. Further details can be found in the remote learning section of the website.

Thank you once again to our school partner **The Manchester United Foundation**. The Foundation are keen to support vulnerable families, and are once again working with us to deliver food parcels to those families who are struggling with this current situation. 60 food parcels were delivered by Werneth staff directly to families on Wednesday, and the facility will be offered every week up to the Easter holidays. If you are struggling to feed your family, please let us know via your year leader (details below) and we can arrange help for you.



Thank you to Year 7 parents for the **virtual Year 7 Parents Evening**, which took place on Wednesday of this week. Over 60% of you took part in the event, meeting teachers via our SchoolCloud system and we received excellent feedback from parents. Here are a range of your responses:

"I felt the need to email this morning to say how fantastic and impressive the Year 7 Parents Evening was last night. I like any other Y7 parent, new to the secondary experience, was anxious to see how my son was settling in, and therefore was good to see and hear his teachers input so I can support him and the school moving forward. Therefore well done to your team in delivering this during a difficult time." "Would just like to say how nice the parents' evening was today. Was lovely speaking to everyone." "Just wanted to say a massive well done to all the staff for tonight's parents evening. What a brilliant experience, and like one parent said 'it's like speed dating but with teachers.'" "We are very pleased with our daughter's progress & lots of positive feedback. A good night"

Year 10 are up next, and then **Year 9**. We will be contacting parents.

Parent Governor: Would you like to become a part of our team? As part of our academisation process, we are making some changes to our governing board, with some governors remaining and new governors joining the board. We already have one parent governor but we would like to appoint a second. If you are interested in the potential of becoming a governor for Werneth School we want to talk to you. It's a chance to influence the future of our school. Please contact my PA Mrs Humphreys, and we will send out further information to you. Her email address is catherine.humphreys@wernethschool.com

A reminder that **next week, Werneth School will be completely closed for half term.** No remote learning. A chance to breathe and relax and take a break. Remote learning returns on Monday 22nd February, as does our in-school provision for those who are booked onto this.

If your child has been in school this week for their remote learning, we are offering a **contact tracing service during the school holiday next week.** You should have received an information request for contact details next week if that's the case. Should your child develop symptoms next week and then test positive for Coronavirus over the next week, please let us know via positivecase@wernethschool.com. The email will be monitored daily, and we will use it to contact trace and inform other parents if necessary so that any isolations can be sorted out.



Thank you to our **PE department and Miss Hibbert in Dance for their "getting physical" sessions** this week as part of our Remote Learning offer. We hope you took part in this opportunity for a break away from the computer screen.



We have a fantastic opportunity for our **year 9 and 10 dance students to take part in a virtual workshop with a professional choreographer 'James Cousins' on Monday 22nd of February.** James Cousins has created many professional dance works but will be giving an insight into his wonderful work 'Within Her Eyes' during the practical workshop. This is a piece of repertoire we study as part of the BTEC curriculum and so it is a valuable experience for students to be involved in. Miss Hibbert has sent an email to all parents/carers of dance students via EDULINK about the workshop and if you would like your child to be involved then you need to reply ASAP as places are limited. We will provide **year 9** places on a first come first served basis.

This term we have run a virtual **Golden Ticket** for our students that have adapted well, shown resilience and worked above and beyond the expectations of the class teacher. Two students were selected by each member of staff for entry into the end of term draw. The draw by Mr Bennett handed me the names in school yesterday, and I made the draw, One student was drawn to win the first prize of an Asus Chromebook. We are delighted to announce that the winner for this half term was **Jack Gallagher in Year 10.** Congratulations and well deserved. You will be able to collect your Chromebook next half term.



Year 7 and Year 8. Are you a keen writer? You may want to consider entering the English department's new writing competition.

YEAR 7 WRITING COMPETITION: You've done an amazing job writing about Greek myths this half-term. Now it's your turn to write your own myth! Remember, the Ancient Greeks used myths to explain things that happened in our world - like the change of seasons or where humans came from. Can you write a story to explain something happening in our world today? You can base your story on a myth you are already familiar with or write something completely new. There will be a prize for our top entries. Please submit your work to Mrs Clegg at anthea.clegg@wernethschool.com The final day for submission is Monday 22nd February. Winners will be announced Friday the 26th. Good luck!

YEAR 8 WRITING COMPETITION: Mary Shelley wrote Frankenstein while having a ghost story writing competition with her friends. While on holiday, bad weather meant that they were trapped inside a villa on Lake Geneva and looking for ways to pass the time. With the wind howling and the rain knocking at the door (or so we would like to imagine) the perfect Gothic setting was created for her story. Write a short story of no more than two pages. Use Mary Shelley's Gothic story as inspiration when writing your own. Things to think about: Where will you set your terrifying tale? Who will be the main characters? What will be the big spook which will make your reader jump out of their seat? How will you tell the whole story in only two pages? Try to include some Gothic elements in your story: the supernatural, isolated locations, spooky or gloomy settings, pathetic fallacy and symbolism. There will be a prize for our top entries. Please submit your work to Mrs Clegg at anthea.clegg@wernethschool.com. The final day for submission is Monday 22nd February. Winners will be announced Friday the 26th. Good luck!

This month celebrates **Safer Internet Day** in the UK and its aim is to educate everyone in how they can play their part in making the internet a better place. Celebrated globally and coordinated in the UK by the UK Safer Internet Centre, Safer Internet Day is a great opportunity to talk to your family and friends about the safe, responsible and positive use of technology, and to pledge how you will help to create a kinder and better online community. With our young people spending more time on their devices to access online learning it is vital that we are all aware of risks that the online world can pose and ways to help young people understand and to navigate these without harm. Linked below are some excellent resources that you can access to help support and start conversations on how to stay safe on the internet and ultimately they will help you keep your child safe.

There are some particular useful guides for social media, gaming, music streaming and catfishing on our school website: <https://www.wernethschool.com/parents/online-safety> There are some resources attached below from the UK Internet Safer Centre and a short video helping young people understand what they can trust online and what they cannot. <https://vimeo.com/481359801>

Have a safe and relaxing half term week, and we will see you all back online on Monday 22nd February. We expect there will be a government update that week on the plans for a return to school. Mr Conroy, headteacher

FURTHER USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

HOW CAN I CONTACT SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME?

Use the emails below to contact us if possible, but you can also ring our office staff on 0161 494 1222 and they will help if they can. Please note that most of our teachers are teaching remote learning from home, and we have a support staff rota on each day in school

so you will not be able to contact every member of staff if you ring us.

Emails have members of staff monitoring them daily during the week, and will get you the quickest response to resolve an issue.

When emailing any of these addresses, please ensure you state the student and the year group concerned ... it's easy to forget this vital piece of information!

passwords@wernethschool.com	For any password clarification or resets. Our technical team will answer this every day on the same day during the week.
remotelearning@wernethschool.com	For non-password issues with your remote learning, or work to be sent home. We have a small team of staff in every day organising this.
vk@wernethschool.com	If your child is in school as part of the Critical Worker/Vulnerable group, you can use this email to communicate with us if you need to do so
ineedhelp@wernethschool.com	For anything else not covered by the above, or if you need our support and don't know where to turn.

Remember that you can find teachers' emails via this page on the website:

<https://wernethschool.com/contact> and select "Teaching Staff" in the box on the right.

Year Inclusion Managers are also in school on a rota: if you need to speak to them, you can contact them easiest therefore on the following days:

Miss Taylor, **Year 7** on TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS

Mrs Arnold, **Year 8** on TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS

Mrs Lewis, **Year 9** on MONDAYS and THURSDAYS

Miss Hunt, **Year 10** on WEDNESDAYS and FRIDAYS

Mrs Barnard, **Year 11** on TUESDAYS and FRIDAYS

If your child is classified in one of the government's vulnerable categories and not in school, your year leader will contact you on the days listed above. If your child has an **Education Health and Care Plan**, a member of our SEN department will also contact regularly to check on their progress.

School dates for 2021/22 academic year - <https://wernethschool.com/termdates>

Supporting mental health during lockdown

Due to this lockdown we are aware that mental health issues are on the rise with children and young people, and parents are anxious to know how to support their children. Kooth will be delivering some drop in events for parents to give them an awareness of Kooth and how it can support their children.

Kooth is available to young people in Stockport from the age of 11-18. **Kooth.com** is free and is the largest emotional wellbeing platform in England. It is directly commissioned by the NHS. and can give young people support 24/7 on the platform. Additionally there is also a variety of tools and activities to help build resilience and peer support via moderated forums.

Counselling support can be accessed between 12 noon and 10pm during the week and 6-10 during the weekend, whereby young people can receive an live messaging chat for up to an hour a week from a qualified counsellor, on a weekly basis.



READING: A KEY LOCKDOWN PASTIME

Look out for our [Reading Challenge](#) [see picture below] to win achievement points or a high street voucher. In the meantime, just do your best, get some exercise, talk to friends and family and keep in contact with your form tutors.

The 'Best of' Links to Reading Resources.

Reading Cloud; <https://readingcloud.net/>

Carel Press Complete Issues,

The Username and password are both Werneth. <https://www.completeissues.co.uk/>

Overdrive. You do need to be signed up to your local library. <https://www.overdrive.com/>

BorrowBox,

<https://www.borrowbox.com/>

Magazines: The Economist, Empire, How It Works, Match of the Day, National Geographic, New Scientist, NET, Newsweek, Photography Week, Tech Advisor and Total Film, and other titles encompassing craft, food, fitness and sport.

Audible has also opened up a variety of FREE-listening audiobooks while schools are closed. The best of these for our students are the Tween and Teen genres and a Folk & Fairytales selection from around the world (for those wishing to follow Einstein's advice!). For households with full Audible subscriptions the Teen & Young Adult collection offers a great variety of genres including difficult situations.

<https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

Oak National Academy Virtual Library, is part of the government and National Literacy Trust sponsored lockdown school supporting learning in all subjects. This library has guest authors each week (starting with Jacqueline Wilson), with different books made available every day.

<https://library.thenationalacademy/>

Apple Books App, offers a small selection of free eBooks & audiobooks (amongst others that are chargeable) for those with Apple devices (iPhone/iPad/iPod/Apple Watch).

Toppsta, join the Toppsta community and enjoy lots of online events. Read their blog here;
<https://toppsta.com/blog/view/bookish-ideas-if-you're-self-isolating-with-the-kids>