

Parental Update on 29th January 2021

Updates this week: Adapting to remote learning; children in school - testing; tips for remote learning; keeping up-to-date; half term break; Resources to help parents encourage your child to read; Werneth School Reading Challenge; Parents' Consultation Evenings


Resources at foot of update:







Contacting us ; confirmed school dates for 21/22 school year ; mental health resources ; additional data for mobile phones


Another week of lockdown learning completed, and we have two remaining weeks before February half term. It's been lovely to see the quality of some of the work that is being completed at home: we all know how challenging it is to work remotely, so thanks to everyone for their patience and determination to get through it. I will be publishing another "Celebration Gallery" next week.

Our students are producing great work, our parents and carers are developing new skills in patience and probably learning new things yourselves, and our staff are learning to adapt to teaching in a virtual way. We know that **80% of you are accessing lessons regularly** which is great ... **the other 20% need to get themselves in gear!** We will keep on checking and liaising with parents. It is absolutely vital to keep up to date, so you are not disadvantaged in the future when you return. I know from the weekly meetings I attend with other Stockport key leaders that we are moving in the right direction to return to normality - it's just a case now of **when** not **if**. So keep heart, and keep your eye on the fact that we will all be returning in the not-too-distant future. We hope that will be before Easter in some form, though the latest feedback is that this may be in some staggered way. The government have suggested return may be from **8th March**: we will of course keep you updated when we know any confirmations.

Remote Learning Tips For Students



<p>1</p>  <p>Plan your day. Know which lessons you have and resources you need before you start.</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Create and follow a daily routine. Be on time for your online lessons.</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>Lock away any distractions. Or put mobile devices on Aeroplane mode.</p>
<p>4</p>  <p>Create your own workspace or area. Keep it organised and functional.</p>	<p>5</p>  <p>Take notes in your lessons, use mind maps, sketch notes to help remember information.</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>Make time for yourself to have a break. Reward yourself with some down time.</p>
<p>Just as Important Tips to Check Out.</p>		
<p>7 Practice mindfulness for 10 minutes a day</p>	<p>8 Chat with Friends and Family when you can during the day</p>	<p>9 Ask for Help if you are stuck on a task or question</p>



READING AT HOME has never been a more valid use of your time at home either! We support you in doing that ... see the large section below to help you organise yourself for reading!

Children who are working in school: the government has updated advice on testing this week. This is confirmation that - should a child test positive for Coronavirus via our in-school tests or through an external test - we will need to isolate the “bubble” in which they have been working. This means the children who have been working in the same classroom as the affected child.

We offered the first of our **Brinnington drop-in surgeries** at First House this Thursday. It was also good to catch up with parents at that, and it's a surgery we will offer fortnightly. Thank you for those who handed in their completed work: initial feedback is that some of it is amazing in quality. Those students who handed in their work were provided with new workpacks to begin their next learning step. The same facility exists in school for parents to drop in with work and collect a new pack.

Advanced notice that the Department for Education has this week confirmed that **schools will not be open at all during half term week**. For the week commencing 15th February, there will be no remote learning and no vulnerable/critical group in school. It's a rest week for everyone. Families with free school meals will not receive an e-voucher for school that week: you will receive support from Stockport local authority instead.

PARENTS' EVENINGS

Virtual Parents Evenings are now confirmed as follows using the SchoolCloud App, and you will receive information via year leaders. Feedback from parents from the Year 8 event before Christmas was very positive.

YEAR 7 - Wednesday 10th February - 4pm to 7pm

YEAR 10 - Thursday 25th February - 4pm to 7pm

YEAR 9 - Thursday 4th March - 4pm to 7pm

Year 11 will be organised when we have something useful to feedback to parents on GCSE grades and how they will be decided. At the moment, the government are suggesting that we may know those details in early March.

READING: A KEY LOCKDOWN PASTIME

With news of the decline in Literacy Levels during Lockdown, please allow us to help you support your children to ensure they too are not subject to this decline.

We offer below:

- 'Reasons to Read' and a brief overview of reading resources accessible from home with links to the 'best of' sources,
- Suggested reading material, to suit a variety of tastes and subject knowledge, especially while schools are closed.

Reading is important for better success in ALL subjects. It helps develop understanding and imagination, which in turn nurtures creativity and a wider awareness of the world. It can lead to a better grasp of both subject and assessment material, as well as broadening vocabulary to better express that understanding to others in education, in work and in life. Take it from one of the greatest scientists there ever was... a quote often attributed to Einstein, suggests *"If you want your children to be intelligent read them fairy tales... If you want them to be more intelligent read them more fairy tales."* Whether or not these are his exact words, Einstein was definitely of the opinion that fairy tales were vital in a child's intellectual development. Is it

perhaps because they develop the ability to 'think outside the box' with greater imagination and creativity? To dare to think how the impossible might be possible...

Reading also contributes to personal growth; the characters we encounter in fiction help us decide who we want to be (or not to be!); the wider our reading, the better choices we can make. The situations characters face in the fiction we read offer strategies for life, a wider awareness of the world around us, and the potential consequences, perhaps previously not considered, of both our actions, and our behaviour towards others. A quote from the National Literacy Trust suggests **'Reading has also provided refuge in this difficult time, supporting children's mental wellbeing and enabling them to dream about the future'** They go on to say, **Children who enjoy reading and writing have significantly better mental wellbeing than their peers.**

If you would like to read more about reading please visit... <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/10-benefits-reading-why-you-should-read-everyday.html>

Given all the screen-time that online learning involves, there may be concerns about reading with overstrained eyes... Audiobooks are great to counteract these concerns, as they offer the opportunity to rest the eyes, and enjoy being read to by someone else. For this reason, they most certainly figure in the 'Best of' sources detailed here. There is also a link to a whole host of self help leaflets and articles.

Also 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.

Happy reading. **Mrs H Taylor,**
Librarian
helen.taylor@wernethschool.com

[The 'Best of' Links to Reading Resources.](#)

[Reading Cloud](#); you can get recommendations of authors and read reviews from your peers of books you might like.
<https://readingcloud.net/>

[Carel Press Complete Issues](#), the library has signed up to this and it gives us access to lots of articles and focus guides on a variety of subjects including Body Image, Bullying, Religion and Gender. The Username and password are both Werneth.
<https://www.completeissues.co.uk/>

[Overdrive](#), the best of these are in the Kids and Teens sections, with potential to browse both Fiction and Non-Fiction by Subject, for more titles to support subject knowledge and learning. You do need to be signed up to your local library. <https://www.overdrive.com/>

BorrowBox, for students the best are in the Children's eAudio section, whilst parents might be interested in the Wonderful Wellbeing titles, to keep everyone's spirits up at home. Again to use this platform, you need to be signed up with a local library and have the app downloaded.
<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.thenational.academy/>

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).

There are also ebooks and audiobooks accessible through various platforms. The best of these include the easily searchable Loyal Books (<http://www.loyalbooks.com/>), Digitalbook (<https://www.digitalbook.io/>) and Lit2Go (<https://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>). The first offers the widest range of formats to download to read in iBooks (iPhone&iPad), Nook, Sony Reader and Kindle, or Audiobooks to listen to in your browser or download as MP3(chapter files), iTunes, Podcast, iPod/iPhone M4b and RSS reader feed. These are generally older UK and US books that are now in the Public Domain.

The Words for Life website from The National Literacy Trust provides parents, children and young people with activities and support to improve their language, literacy and communication skills from home for all age groups from 0-6 months to 12 years.

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>

And Finally... <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/30-books-that-everyone-should-read-least-once-their-lives.html>

Keep safe and healthy, and have a good weekend.

Mr A Conroy, headteacher

FURTHER USEFUL LINKS FOR PARENTS

HOW CAN I CONTACT SCHOOL?

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.	
<p>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:</p> <p>Miss Taylor, Year 7 on TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS</p> <p>Mrs Arnold, Year 8 on TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS</p> <p>Mrs Lewis, Year 9 on MONDAYS and THURSDAYS</p> <p>Miss Hunt, Year 10 on WEDNESDAYS and FRIDAYS</p> <p>Mrs Barnard, Year 11 on TUESDAYS and FRIDAYS</p> <p>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.</p>	

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.

Free Additional Data for mobile phones

We are able to access free additional data for mobile phones for families that meet the following criteria;

- You do not have broadband internet at your home.
- You are currently unable to afford additional data.
- Your child is experiencing disruption to face-to-face education.

You would need to be a customer of one of the following mobile phone companies: **Three; SMARTY; Virgin Mobile; EE; Tesco Mobile; Sky Mobile; 02.** If you meet these criteria and genuinely need additional data to support your child's learning because you use your mobile phone to access the internet please can you email mobiledata@wernethschool.com with the following information:

***Name of the account holder (for the mobile phone number);
number of the mobile device;***

mobile network of that device (e.g. Three)

Once we have received that information, a member of the school admin team will contact a Government online service requesting that you get additional free data. When your network has processed the request you will receive a text from your provider confirming the increase in data.