

Headteacher's Blog 12th February 2020 A big thank you to everyone!

As we reach the end of the half term, there is a definite sense of "light at the end of the tunnel". The vaccine roll out is gathering pace and we await the government announcement around the 22nd February, where we should hear the plan for how students will begin to return to school. I will not try and second guess what this announcement will be. I am often asked by parents what the plan is, but I can assure you that through this whole pandemic school leaders have found out the plans at the same time as everyone else, which has made it very difficult to plan ahead. We will at least have two weeks' notice to prepare this time and I will of course be in contact with you once we have plans to share.

Thank you to the staff

I want to pay tribute to the staff and thank them for all of their efforts through what has been another challenging half term.

Teachers have had to work above and beyond to deliver live lessons, setting up remote learning, supporting children in the role of the tutor and coming into school to work with students in our in-school provision. Having taught live lessons myself, I can assure you that it is three times the amount of work to deliver quality live lessons as it is in the classroom. This is why we have ensured we have a balance in the number of live lessons and had a focus on the quality of the experience in these lessons. A reminder to Year 10 and 11 families to check the updated live lessons rota from the letters sent out on 5th December; links below.

[2021.02.05-Year 11 Timetable Letter.pdf \(thecoleshillschool.org\)](#)

[2021.02.05-Year 10 Timetable Letter.pdf \(thecoleshillschool.org\)](#)

Support staff have also been real heroes in school over the last half term. I am so grateful to all of these staff, who just step up to every challenge. Children who are our in-school provision have benefited from exceptional support and guidance from our Pastoral Team. We have had to set up a 'Testing Centre' in the school hall, which support staff volunteered to operate, undergoing training; working in shifts on top of their normal jobs. Without the efforts of these staff our school would not be able to operate.

Thank you to the students

Thank you to the students for keeping going and for the excellent engagement in live lessons and remote education this half term. A real highlight was the engagement of the Year 11 students in the assessment fortnight, where attendance and response rates was exceptional.

As a school we would like to thank families for your engagement during the house competitions. Obviously, there were no winners or losers this week, where we asked you to send us some reflections on how your child has coped with the lockdown. Parents and carers were all too happy to say thank you to their children!

Mr Grove says "It has been delightful to receive these sentences (some may have exceeded the word count but we will let you off), your positivity has been much needed during this turbulent time. As educators working in school, we are always proud of the children in our care. However, when we get the opportunity to read to what their parents and carers have said about them it makes us even more proud of their ability to embody the school values of: self-management, perseverance, innovation, reflection, independence and teamwork.

Due to the sheer number of responses, I have included below the first entry of each year group for my blog today. The rest of the responses can be found on the schools website.:-

https://www.thecoleshillschool.org/uploads/Headteachers_Blog/2020-2021/2021.02.12-House_Competitions_-_Parent_Responses.pdf

Please take the time to read through the responses to see what fantastic students we have.

Here is sample of our wonderful responses from parents and carers.

“Sophie has made us proud during this lockdown because she has taken up running and has put in an amazing amount of effort to improve!”

“Travis has continued to make us proud with his work ethic during lockdown, he completes his lessons without being asked. Travis wanted to ensure he continued with his drumming and decided to take his Grade 5 exam during lockdown, we are so proud of his achievements to date but are over the moon that he has passed with a merit.”

“I’m proud of my daughter’s resilience and optimism during these uncertain times.”

“Jacob didn’t find adapting and adjusting to home schooling easy to start with, due to the change of routine however, Jacob has joined all of his live lessons every day. Jacob has independently completed all of assignments and submitted good quality work back to his teachers, hopefully on time!

“Your tenacity and drive to achieve what you can during these difficult times makes me so proud, you are a shining star keep it up and you will succeed.”

Thank you to all parents and carers

As a parent of three secondary age children myself (Year 7, 10 and 12) and seeing how hard home schooling is, I want to thank you for all of your efforts and the support you have provided for the students. I know for many of you there have been real challenges and I appreciate all you are doing to keep your child learning. I also really appreciate the messages of support that we have received during this half term, more than I have ever received in my time as Headteacher. These messages mean a lot and give the staff a much-needed boost. Our school moto of ‘learning and achieving together’ extends to the whole school community.

Reporting Covid 19 over half term

If your child should test positive for Covid 19 over half term please email the dedicated no-reply email service: Covid19@thecoleshillschool.org

School returns on 22nd February

A reminder that live lessons and remote education, as well as our in-school provision, begin again on Monday 22nd February. Our in-school provision is strictly limited to those who we have requested to be in school and the children of key workers, so you must book your child in with us if you need them to be in school; please email chetwynd.j@thecoleshillschool.org

I hope you and your family have a restful half term. Take care and stay safe.

Ian Smith-Childs

Headteacher

