

## Headteacher's Blog Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### *Working at home – how to support your child and managing expectations*

I am writing to you at an unprecedented time for all of us. We are all having to adapt the way in which we live our lives and I know this will be presenting some real challenges for many of you, as it has for staff at school. Today I am writing with some thoughts about how you can support your child in working from home, as well as some guidance about keeping your children safe online as they may be spending more time than normal accessing the internet.

With three children at home myself, in years 6, 9 and 11, I can assure you that I have seen first-hand both the amazing work that teachers are putting into ensuring children continue to get high quality resources and the challenges of supporting children to complete them. I hope the following can act as some support in managing expectations in the coming weeks.

- Please be aware that there are currently **NO NEW TOPICS** being covered. All of the work we are setting is to review, revise and embed the learning that has already taken place in schools with topics that we have already taught. This may change later in the Summer term, but this is the case for now. It is for you as a family, and individual students, to pick and choose from the work available to help keep minds active and to keep their learning live. We are simply providing enough for you who want to do more, but no one will be judging anybody on how much is done. As staff we are aware that every family will be facing different circumstances and challenges at different times. We also know that individual students will be learning at different paces, just as they would with their teacher in the classroom.
- You may want to build a wide variety of activities which may include physical exercise (my 11 year old is loving Joe Wicks every morning at 9am!), reading, creativity, cooking, gardening, watching films, chatting with others as a family and with friends online. Make the most of enjoying the opportunities that this enforced grounding is offering.
- Please don't worry about completing all activities and trying to return them to us. Guidance can be seen in the FAQ sheet which is linked at the end of this blog. Our current focus is on Year 11, who should be completing work as set as this may form part of their predicted grade, as well as any outstanding BTEC work, and ensuring any outstanding Y13 coursework is complete. After Easter we will increase our focus on Year 10 and 12. As the weeks progress we will communicate further about marked work, but we are all feeling our way with the situation as it stands now.
- If you are having difficulty with using the online resources, we are developing new packs of work for those that need it after Easter and we will be sending information out about this next week.

The FAQ sheet will hopefully provide some more answers to some of the common questions that have been asked over the last week.

Everyone is dealing with the current situation differently. We know and appreciate this and ask for the patience of our families as we also adapt what we are doing. Teachers and support staff are being asked to work in ways we never have before. This week the school has been open for children of Critical Workers and we will continue to be open, throughout the Easter holiday and through to the time this crisis is over, for these families as well as any families who feel their children are vulnerable and in need of our support. This should of course be an absolute last resort, where you are unable to support your child at home. We would ask you to contact our school reception, which is open during normal school

hours, if you are in need of this service so that we can plan, as we have minimal staffing operating and cannot manage many students.

Teachers are adapting to the new way of working with an incredible level of creativity and innovation and we are actively seeking out the latest applications and technology to support with student learning. There will be communication coming out after the Easter holiday about this.

At the bottom of this blog are some links to useful links:

FAQ – this goes into more detail about some of the common questions families have had this week

[https://thecoleshillschool.org/uploads/PDF/Headteachers\\_Blog/2019-2020/2020.03.27-FAQ.pdf](https://thecoleshillschool.org/uploads/PDF/Headteachers_Blog/2019-2020/2020.03.27-FAQ.pdf)

Social Media Guidance – as some children will be spending more time online and will understandably want to socialise with their friends via social media there are some reminders here about staying safe online.

[https://thecoleshillschool.org/uploads/PDF/Headteachers\\_Blog/2019-2020/2020.03.27-Social\\_Media\\_Guidance\\_.pdf](https://thecoleshillschool.org/uploads/PDF/Headteachers_Blog/2019-2020/2020.03.27-Social_Media_Guidance_.pdf)

I hope that you have found this information useful.

Take care of your families and stay safe.

Ian Smith-Childs

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