

27 April 2020



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ELMGREEN

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Headteacher

Dear Families

I hope that you have had a good week and that your children have been able to access the Google Classroom effectively.

Mr Ryan has done an excellent job in connecting us up and at present the following percentage of Year 7 to 10 have logged on to Google Classrooms:

Year Group	Percentage
7	79%
8	76%
9	74%
10	81%

This is a real achievement in a week but it still leaves over 20% of students who have not accessed resources so far. At present we are checking whether there continues to be an issue with computer access with families or whether students have simply not logged on. If it is the former then the Parents Promoters Foundation (PPF) continues to offer a hardship fund which can be accessed through the email ppf.hardship.fund@gmail.com

Thank you to parents who have responded to the PPF about games or stationery. We are hoping to set up a table in reception where people can pick up or drop off on their daily exercise. Again, I will update you as soon as we are up and running.

In the next week or so the PPF will be launching a fundraising initiative to look at how we help students and families in the short and long term around IT access and other hardship issues. Over the recent weeks dealing with COVID-19 it has become very clear that this is not a short term issue we are dealing with and we are looking at a long term strategy to help as many young people as possible access education. I hope to give an update on this initiative next Monday.

The Key Stages have all been very busy this week. Ms Moran has started her own Rewards Assembly this week which you can catch here and the Heads of Year continue to post their excellent assemblies on Google classroom. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OeMFOHFF0tw>

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More and more we will be showing examples of students work so please can we make sure that we continue to upload it to Google Classroom. The Art Department is already making a brilliant virtual gallery.

Mr Arnett with Key Stage 4 has been busying himself with getting the provision right for our current Year 11. He will be sending out a letter tomorrow with a Google link for those resources. He is also finalising our online options process which will be launched next Monday in conjunction with Mr Haughton-Campbell and Ms West. As we don't have the luxury of an Options Evening we want to ensure that Year 9 students and families have an equally good if not better experience this year. The Options team will explain how on Monday.

Ms West has also been busy showcasing her digital skills this week. Even if your son or daughter is not in the Sixth form it is worth watching just to show the sheer breadth of academic rigour and wraparound care that the Sixth Form offers. Also, Ms West has managed to add some very fancy graphics which gives it just that little bit extra.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgM76iWy1Sw>

I would just like to thank the Heads of Year who gave a series of excellent assemblies about Stephen Lawrence Day last week and the students who responded to the idea about living your best life. As is always the case when someone dies tragically young they are always frozen in time at the age where they passed away. It is extraordinary that Stephen would now be 45 years old and it is doubly important that he is remembered, not just for a life not lived but also for the extraordinary impact that his death had on British society. I think every one of my generation has a personal memory of how Stephen changed society. This of course was due to the almost superhuman efforts of his family and particularly his mother, Doreen Lawrence.

I had the privilege of meeting Baroness Lawrence recently and was struck by two things. The first was her absolute ordinariness, just a really normal person who hadn't asked for or wanted the spotlight. The second was her clear core of steel and determination. She had never stopped until she had changed what was a great injustice and she didn't stop then. It has occurred to me over the last few weeks that it is people like this, ordinary people, who haven't asked for the limelight but are working valiantly to overcome a great threat are the very people that we are correctly celebrating every Thursday evening. Let us hope that this recognition of the ordinary people who make change happen lasts longer than the current crisis.

Safeguarding and staying safe

Can I just remind you to use the safeguarding@the-elmgreen-school.org.uk if you have any concerns in this area. We are now entering the fifth week of lockdown and undeniably that is putting a strain on some families. If you have any concerns please contact us to see if we can help.

Please all ensure that you continue to also stay fit and healthy. Please stay healthy within the current guidance and make sure you are doing your daily exercise. Our PE department seem to be making a mission for you to do so and you can follow their exploits on Instagram and Twitter.

I also attach this useful Q and A from the BBC. I think it answers lots of questions that children might have. If nothing else I found out what the 19 stood for!

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-52406475/coronavirus-when-will-pandemic-end-and-other-questions-from-kids>

There has been lots of talk over the last few days about the exit strategy for the country. A big part of this will of course be how schools open their doors again. I think there is a perception that Headteachers' have some secret information but I promise that we don't. We might know something a couple of hours before everybody else but that is about it. Rest assured though we as a school and as a Trust are really starting to think about what that will look like once we get the go ahead to open our actual doors again. Ofsted have also urged schools to reopen as soon as possible. We will keep families informed as much as humanly possible. There will be hundreds of things to consider as we approach the next phase of planning, from what the curriculum looks like to how you borrow a pen but our number one priority will always be the safety of your child – the 'we look after each other' of The Elmgreen Way.

Finally it is Mr Truman, the Head of Geography's choice of websites this week. Next week Mr Bennett will give him a run for his money in History.

<https://www.senecalearning.com/blog/gcse-geography-revision/> - for all academic aims, Seneca provides a clear structure for learning and algorithm-infused feedback

<https://worldmapper.org/maps/> - for those of you interested in maps with a twist, worldmapper tells a story about data, geography and visualisation

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/> - If a photograph says a thousand words, this website tells many stories, with a particular focus on animals, science, history and travel

<https://www.gapminder.org/> - Want to refresh your world view? Gapminder was created with that in mind, using up-to-date data to show us all how the world is changing faster than we realise

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006mywy/episodes/player> - Why not immerse yourself within the world around you and listen to David Attenborough whilst you do so. This link takes you to Planet Earth's catalogue, allowing you to explore each corner of the earth from your home

Yours faithfully



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