

Friday 10th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

This will, I hope, be my final email before the start of the new “term” on 20th April

First of all, I hope you are all well and coping with the very different world in which we now find ourselves. I am very aware that we have families in a variety of different circumstances. We have the sick, the self isolated and the shielded. We have key workers juggling work and families; we have families trying to support elderly relatives; we have families adapting to new financial pressures as well as the other anxieties of the last few weeks. Whatever your circumstances, please try and get some rest over the Easter break and make sure that you are taking care of yourselves as well as those around you.

Second, I want to thank you for all the very kind messages of support that you have sent in to staff at the Academy since we closed to most of our students. Last night a parent emailed to say “***I personally can't express my gratitude for the amazing support and information I've had from members of staff at Macclesfield Academy over the last few weeks. A huge big thanks from my household***”. I know she spoke for many of you and I am hugely grateful to all of my staff who have risen so magnificently to the challenge of such unfamiliar circumstances over the last few weeks.

Third, there are just a few matters of detail that I want to clear up:

- I want to reiterate that there is no need for students to be undertaking the tasks set on Show My Homework over the Easter Break. If they are at a loose end, they might want to explore the reading options set out on the website or to try their hand at an Instagram challenge, but they should take a break from the more formal homeworking tasks.
- A number of you have asked about the submission of work and how we will be chasing it up. So far our priority has been to get the work set although some subject have been using both Show My Homework and One Note to start collecting work in and giving feedback. I will write with more information about this in the new term. For now, please just ensure that completed work is kept safe.
- We are aware that there have been some delays in the distribution of Free School Meals vouchers this week. Until this week, we had been making our own arrangements with a voucher company and things seemed to work very smoothly. The government has now taken over the distribution of vouchers from all schools and there seem to be some delays in implementing the changeover. We hope this will be resolved over the next few days but if the delay is causing you real hardship, please let us know. We are all in this together and we will do what we can to help.
- Thank you to all of you who have been supporting our efforts to ensure that students in Years 9 and 10 are treated in the same way as those in Year 11 when it comes to awarding grades. We hope that our parliamentary petition on this matter will go live next week. In that case, the one

email I send next week will be the link so that you can sign it and, if you wish, share it with other friends and family members.

- We met this week with the two new Police Community Support Officers who will be working across Macclesfield schools. Unfortunately, their first job is to visit the families of a number of young people across the town who are believed to have been breaking the requirements of the “lockdown”. While I am glad to say that only half a dozen of their appointments are with Academy students, it is important to stress that we all need to **Stay Home, Save Lives and Protect the NHS**.

Finally, what matters over Easter is to try and get some rest. And as you rest, remember that this, too, will pass. In the words of one colleague *I try to be like an athlete and visualise; visualise the day when I am standing here in my classroom and, once again there is a class of students in front of me*. Or, as a parent put it, *we must try to look forward now to that day, whenever that will be, when your doors will open again and those smiling faces walk in. Most will be so happy to be back to their community*. I especially love the realism of that word “most”! Perhaps at least one or two students will remember my “light shining in the darkness” Christmas assembly. In that assembly I explained that I believe that one of our most important qualities as human beings is our ability to imagine a better world even in the darkest of times. If ever there were a time to exercise that quality, it is now.

Take care, stay safe and have a very Happy Easter



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