



Malton School

A Specialist Science School

SUPPORT INSPIRE THRIVE

1st April 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

Coronavirus Response Update

Further to my last letter on Friday evening, giving details of the amended approach to home learning, I need to write to you all again to explain a small adjustment that has been forced upon us.

We discovered yesterday that the automated email system that provides parents with a standard notification if your son or daughter has not completed all the work, only picks up “events” within the 24 hour period of that day. So, the emails that went out to some parents at 8am yesterday were only the ones where staff had actually logged on to the system early that morning to report work that hadn’t been completed on Monday. All the reports of missing work that staff logged on Monday night were not picked up by the automated system at 8am on Tuesday because they were logged the previous day. We did not know that this would happen and having looked into the possible solutions it is clear that there is nothing technical that we can do to adjust this.

The only solution, therefore, is that the automated email alert is sent out right at the end of each day, at 11.30pm. We did not want to send an email out at this time, but it is the only way we can give the added flexibility that some parents had asked for during the day whilst still allowing staff some flexibility to check the work between 7.00pm and 11.00pm. Whilst I don’t want to be expecting staff to have to work so late in the evening, if I only allowed them a shorter time – say between 7.00pm and 8.00pm – to facilitate an automated email to parents at say 8.30pm – then I know that this would cause issues for colleagues who have their own childcare or other caring arrangements to attend to in that particular time slot. For the avoidance of doubt, the school does NOT want you to check to see if you have an email from us at 11.30pm in the evening. It is simply that it will be there for you in the morning so if your child has anything missing from the previous day they have the time, up to 7pm, to catch up and avoid falling further behind.

I hope that makes sense and you understand that we are trying to make these on-line systems work as best we can, at a difficult time, to allow reasonable flexibility for everyone whilst ensuring that your child continues to get the best possible educational chances. And do remember, the email, if you get one, is only information-sharing on our behalf to help you to help your child to stay on track.

Weekly “Inspire” Challenges

We have decided to provide a series of weekly challenges to inspire the students to get really stuck into an idea and to go beyond the normal curriculum. As you know, at this time, we are unable to run our usual Personal Development Activities on a Thursday afternoon. In an attempt to replace these, whilst the students are all at home, we are going to offer a weekly challenge with awards (Gold, Silver and Bronze) and cash prizes (Amazon vouchers) for the best entries - £30 for the winner, £15 for the runner-up, and £5 for third place.

These challenges are open to students from all year groups (including the current Year 11 and Year 13). They are entirely voluntary. A student may enter a submission for a competition one week and not the next. It is up to them, but I hope they feel inspired by at least some of these competitions to have a go.

We intend to share the winning entries with you all, and potentially a selection of other entries, using our website and social media outlets. Entry into the weekly challenge will signal your willingness for us to share your entry in this way, unless you specifically state with your entry that you do not wish it to be shared.

The challenges will cover a range of skills hopefully giving everyone the chance to participate. If you have a brilliant idea for a challenge do email me and let me know. The challenges so far, to get us going, are as follows:

Submission Date	Title	Task
06/04	Best Lockdown self-help article	The best idea for a practical activity that any student could implement at home to support them through this period of enforced lockdown.
13/04	Best Recipe	The best idea for a practical dish that any student could cook or bake at home for their family.
20/04	Best Original Composition	The best original composition (any genre) using Garageband.
27/04	Best VE Day Commemoration Idea	The best suggestion for a practical and meaningful way to commemorate VE day (8 th May) in your own home - based on the assumption that we are still in lockdown
04/05	Best Book Review	The best review of a book read since the school closure began (you should all be reading a book each week!).
11/05	Best “Found” Poem	The best poem reflecting the current situation using lines that you have “found” from news items or from other poems.
18/05	Best Artistic Response	The best piece of original art (any genre/style) that captures an aspect of the current moment or times that we are living through.

Submissions have to be made electronically, via email to myself – rjw@maltonschool.org - by 9.00am on the date shown. If your work is on paper please just take a photograph of it and submit it as an attachment to your email (not in the main body of the email).

Good luck with it! I hope you enjoy having a go and find some added inspiration in these activities.

Reports

The assessment round two reports for the non-examination year groups (Years 7 to 10 and Year 12) will be sent home by the end of this week. These reports are commenting on the progress of your child during the term just gone up to 20th March. I hope you find them useful. For the parents of Year 10 students, who lost out on the parents' evening that had been scheduled for 25th March, you will find that staff have added a brief written comment to compensate for having not met them face to face this time.

Year 11 and Year 13 Students

We are still waiting to hear the details from the government about the exact methodology for the awarding of grades. We are told this will be with us before Easter and we will share it with you as soon as we have it.

Whilst we are waiting to hear, and in fact as we move through what will now be a longer than usual summer for these students without being in education, can I encourage every one of them to read avidly to keep their minds ticking over. Whatever their plans are for their future, it is definitely important for them to keep mentally fresh and alert. The students in the other year groups are being well-served with ongoing study. If you have a son or daughter in Year 11 or Year 13 they may well be saying that they no longer have anything to do. If their courses are complete that might be strictly true, but they should not take the absence of "official" schoolwork to mean that they shouldn't be continuing to prepare themselves for the next step in their career journey. Whether that is sixth form, college, university, apprenticeship or straight into employment, it is undoubtedly the case that they will benefit from continuing to stretch and challenge their mind. Months of inactivity will not help them to be sharp when they are eventually allowed to move on to the next stage.

I would suggest they use the internet to find out more details about what will be required of them if they do move successfully onto their desired next step in the autumn. Having done that, they can work steadily through those requirements – reading materials and preparing as appropriate. If you think that we might be able to help in any way with these preparations please do get in touch with the most relevant Key Stage Leader or, if linked to a specific subject, with the respective subject teacher.

I will continue to send updates as we move through this process. In the meantime, all the very best again to you and your family.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. S. Williams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rob Williams

Headteacher