



The Nelson Thomlinson School
Wigton
Cumbria
CA7 9PX
...still "outstanding"
(Ofsted, May 2013)

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Headmaster:
Mr DS Northwood, M.A., M.Ed.

14th April 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

These are indeed strange and difficult times, and I am sorry if you are suffering more than most as a result of the Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic.

I am keen to know if your family has been affected personally (directly or indirectly) by the virus and would ask you to contact the school at admin@nts.cumbria.sch.uk should this be the case. (Key messages can then be circulated to the child's teachers (and Head of Year) so that they are aware and we can then be sensitive to the fact.)

Your Support in Your Child's Education

We are doing our utmost here at NTS to maintain the highest standard of education for your child and my colleagues have been working hard to teach 'remotely' as best they can. This has often required many additional hours creating resources, researching websites, downloading and uploading work, typing out detailed instructions and marking your child's work when it comes in.

We are aware of those children who cannot access the internet and are doing what we can here to replicate (in hard copy form or through instruction over the phone) the work their immediate peers are receiving.

I do, however, need to ask for your support as parents during these unusual circumstances as we know of some children who have not completed work by the deadlines set, not done the work at all or have failed to explain in an email to the teacher concerned why they have not followed instructions.

The next few weeks'/months' teaching and learning cannot be repeated at some point later on in your child's academic career; he/she needs to make the most of this remote learning time and keep on top of the work that is being set.

Now that we have returned to the 'normal' routine of remote learning following the Easter break, please would you reinforce these key messages with your children:

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- **Pupils should be doing up to 5 hours a day of school work, Monday to Friday, in line with the 5 normal lessons they would have been having in school. (Some faster workers may complete the work in slightly less time than the hour per lesson allocated.)**
- **They need to be checking their school email at regular intervals throughout the day – to receive work and/or instructions, prompts, reminders, feedback etc.**
- **They need to respond promptly and appropriately to the teacher - using their emotional intelligence.**
- **They need to meet deadlines that are set – by the teacher directly or indirectly through the software programmes such moodle, Seneca etc.**

I have mentioned the three-way partnership before (pupil-parent-teacher) and there has never been a greater test of it. It is obviously hard during these trying times for teachers to perform their usual duties (monitor pupils' work habits, chase work and implement sanctions) and we must therefore rely on your support as parents.

Sanctions are virtually impossible to implement during the lockdown (by teachers) but at the very least, a child's poor work ethic during these times will result in the following – **and it would help if you reinforced this message with your child if appropriate:**

- A (significant) degradation of the rapport the pupil has with the teacher
- A (much) lower Attitude to Learning grade issued by the teacher for the child in question
- Potentially (very) depressed grades in any tests or assessments (whichever format they may take)
- A decrease in their predicted grade in the subject in question
- Head of Year intervention and phone calls to parents to discuss the matter

Reporting Absence from Remote Learning

Pupil 'attendance' at remote learning sessions and reporting 'absence'

I appreciate that there may be extreme situations where your child is too unwell to do any remote learning. **If this is the case, please phone the school admin team by 10am on the day in question.** This way a message can be sent round to my teaching colleagues so that they know not to expect work on that day from the pupil in question.

I did not mean for this letter to be entirely negative. Indeed, I am pleased to say that the majority of pupils are working hard and deserve praise rather than criticism; I do hope those in question feel spurred on by their teachers' words of support and encouragement. Many – and I know this from my own personal experience – have been strict self-managers, efficient and effective in their learning, and prompt and courteous in their communication with staff. It would be nice if you could reinforce this message too where appropriate! Thank you for your continued support.

Kind regards,



Mr DS Northwood,
Headmaster