

Headteacher's Blog - 1st May 2020

Working at home

As we finish Week 6 of the lock down, I think we are now finding our way in the Smith-Childs household, with a Year 6 doing Joe Wicks and Google Classrooms, a Year 9 working through her home learning tasks and a Year 11 beginning some preparatory work for his A Levels. I am not saying this is working perfectly and we have definitely established that Mrs Smith-Childs is far better at home schooling than me!

I do hope that some of the strategies we have put in place over the last week have helped you, including the use on online teachers to support Oak National Academy lessons and the work packs that we have been sending out for those that need it. Please see last week's blog for all the information you need and expectations of students who are able to work from home, though we are very conscious that this will look different for families at different times. You can find all my blogs on our website from the homepage, just scroll down to Headteacher's Blog.

We would very much value your thoughts on what we are doing to support learning at home. There will be a survey coming out next week, so please do respond to that. You can also reply to this e mail with any thoughts or comments.

Sixth Form Update

Our current Year 12 students are working hard and have been engaging with their teachers through a number of ways. It is pleasing to hear teachers talking about the quality of work that is being submitted and to see that courses are continuing, despite the current situation. A letter for Year 12 families is coming out separately today.

Courses have now finished for Year 13 and students will be thinking about the next stage in their education or careers. A separate letter will be coming out for Year 13 students with tips about how do this, but a key idea Mr Owen wants all Sixth Form students to think about is the question employers may ask in the future 'what did you do during lock down'? Remember Leighton Buzzard everyone....

Year 11 students who are doing preparatory work for their courses in Year 12 or college we have created a new are in the Home Study section of the website called Preparing for Year 12 <https://www.thecoleshillschool.org/students/preparing-for-year-12> which will be populate over the coming week.

The Wilson Block nears completion!

As I type this the world outside my office window is looking very different! Diggers, construction staff and their machinery have been hard at it as we enter the final phase of construction. The scaffolding is now down and the plaza area is being worked on. I had a tour of the inside of the building two weeks ago and can share some photos with you. The school will look very different when we do eventually return.



View of Wilson Block from playground



View of Wilson Block C/B Block



Working on the new café area...



Triple classroom on top floor which can be 3 classrooms or an exam hall

Support for families in need of financial assistance

Families entitled to Free School Meals are currently receiving vouchers through the Edenred system. Although there have been a number of issues on a national level with the system I want to thank the team in school, especially Helen Bingham our Finance Manager, for ensuring families get their vouchers. A reminder that if you feel you are eligible for Free School Meals now or in the future you can apply by clicking the link on our website which you can find here:

<https://www.thecoleshillschool.org/parents/financial-assistance>

As we hear of any other ways to support you we will update you, the fund below is one that may be of interest.

Turn2us Coronavirus Grant Fund

The Turn2us Coronavirus Grant Fund has been set up to support people who have lost their income as a result of the Coronavirus and to meet their immediate basic household expenses.

Last updated on 28 April 2020

Who is eligible?

We can only help those who are in immediate financial difficulty due to the Coronavirus. You will need to satisfy all of the following criteria:

You can clearly demonstrate a loss of income due to Covid-19 (evidence will be required showing at least a 50% reduction in earnings, we can accept bank statements, letter from employer outlining change in employment)

You are a resident of the UK / Republic of Ireland

You are not currently in Further or Higher Education

You are over 18

You have less than £1K savings (single person) or less than £2K savings (couple/family)

Please note that if you have received a Turn2us grant in the last 6 months we will be unable to assist you.

How to apply?

Please go to the [Turn2us Coronavirus grant fund page](#) and follow the instructions.

Contact details

Turn2us

London

W6 7NL

I wish you and your families well. Stay home and stay safe.

Ian Smith-Childs

Headteacher