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05 May 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

**Re: Coronavirus Update – 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020 (0152-19NLI)**

I hope this letter finds you all safe and well. I would like to take this opportunity to update parents / carers with some helpful tips, advice and resources regarding home schooling as well as links to external agencies, who are providing crucial support for families during this difficult time. I am also pleased to announce new details regarding Showcase Thursday and outline the exciting social media developments taking place at Longfield.

**Showcase Thursday**

Under normal circumstances, pupils are shown the 'Showcase Thursday' PowerPoint each week during form time, where examples of fantastic work from the previous week are shared. Whilst the school is closed, every Thursday Miss Moohan will send this to all pupils via their school email accounts. Please ask your children about the showcase, some of their work may have been featured!

**Home Schooling – Tips from the Education Endowment Foundation: 'Nine Ways Schools Can Support Home Learning'**

We understand that home schooling is difficult, especially for many of you who are working from home, are key workers, or have other children or family members to care for. When helping your child with their work on Teams, please see the helpful tips below:

- **Activate** - Make sure children are ready to learn – perhaps you could link the learning for that lesson to something that you both find relevant and interesting.
- **Explain** - Try to summarise the new information in each session, focussed around the key lesson theme. Use the PowerPoints and files on Teams to help with this.
- **Practice** - Give children a chance to practice the knowledge that they have gained and provide prompts to support them with this, for example, ensuring they complete the tasks or questions set or adding some of your own questions. For subjects such as maths, it is extremely helpful if you can show them worked examples of questions.
- **Reflect** - Have a discussion about what they have learned in the session.
- **Review** – Ask them 'How does this session link with other work or topics you have completed previously?'.



To ensure that home schooling goes as smoothly as possible, try to follow the advice below:

- Routines - be consistent in how you work, what you expect and how to get there.
- Focus on the positives - give praise to your child for completing a task or producing a piece of impressive work.
- Model coping strategies - be open about how you are coping and explain how to adapt to different situations and problems. Encourage children to explain their decision making process and evaluate whether it is effective or not.
- Reflect on the successes of your approach – Do they need to be adapted by both yourself and your child? Do you have specific times in the day where you and your child work best?
- Consistency of approach – children love the security of routine and clear boundaries – make sure they have scheduled times for breaks, for example to get a snack or complete some exercise.

### **BBC Resources**

In addition to lessons being set by staff on Teams, there is a wealth of lesson material that has been produced by the BBC. This includes age group and subject specific lessons on BBC Bitesize. Key Stage 4 pupils can filter to the correct exam board and complete additional lessons on the same topic they are currently studying. When searching 'Bitesize Daily' on BBC iPlayer it is possible to select programmes by age, linked to topics being studied, which are updated weekly. On the BBC Sounds App, you can search for 'Bitesize Planner' where there are 9 minute podcasts linked to topics being studied, again categorised by age group.

### **Support from External Agencies**

- <https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/downloads> - This link is a collection of downloadable self-help guides that we really like and hope may be useful to you. Some are aimed at adults but the ideas and suggestions in them can still be relevant for young people and parents / carers. If you click on the image it will automatically download the PDF from its source and the credit will link to the originators main website.
- Carla Scaife, the chair of the Darlington Parent / Carer Forum, is hosting a sleep workshop with a CAMHS practitioner on Zoom - 12th May at 10am. All are welcome. The meeting ID is: 8926708224 and Password: 057896
- RSACC has launched a new helpline number to increase its capacity to support women who have experienced rape and sexual violence across Darlington and County Durham. The helpline number is 0300 222 5730 and is open from 10am – 2pm every Monday – Thursday.

### **Guide to Gaming**

We understand that children may be accessing video games or online gaming more than usual during this time. It is never too late to set up parental controls or rules related to gaming. For more information on keeping your child safe online visit [www.darlington.gov.uk/disp](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/disp), or see the following links:

- <https://pegi.info/news/app> - Contains all the information you need about a particular games age rating and content.
- <https://www.askaboutgames.com/> - A gaming website that is packed full with useful guides, information and reviews of all the popular video games.
- <https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/> - Step by step picture guides on how to set up controls on a wide range of devices and gadgets.

Don't forget – children can be learning so much more than just the work set for them by their teachers during this time. Ask your child to help you with the cooking, gardening, baking or other jobs around the house.

### **Social Media Developments**

Over the last few weeks, nationwide events have proved to us the 'power of social media', for example the NHS Clap for our Carers and Captain Tom Moore's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Fundraiser. We are currently updating our social media and encourage parents / carers to follow us on Facebook. Our Twitter page will be up and running soon. In the meantime, please encourage your children to follow our departmental Instagram pages, @longfieldenglish and @longfield\_peddept for fantastic examples of pupil work, revision and working from home tips!

You will be seeing much more of an online presence from us, as well as our brand #WeAreLongfield. If you have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Mr James Raw, Careers and Community Cohesion Lead on [jraw@longfield.swiftacademies.org.uk](mailto:jraw@longfield.swiftacademies.org.uk)

Once again, we thank you for all your support during this time. We cannot wait to get back to normality and to see our pupils again.

Remember, we are all in this together.

#WeAreLongfield

Yours faithfully,



Mr N Lindsay  
Head of School