



# HOWDEN SCHOOL

Derwent Road • Howden • East Yorkshire • DN14 7AL  
T: 01430 430448 • F: 01430 432435 • E: office@howdenschool.net  
Headteacher: Mr G Cannon

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Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your families well. I am guessing that, for you all, it has been an Easter Holiday like no other. Many of our school staff have continued to work hard throughout the Easter Holiday period to keep the school open for the students that need it. Students, staff, parents and carers are also likely to have found it hard to fully switch off in these times of lost routines and swirling speculation with just one story filling our waking (and dreaming) hours.

It is now a week into the start of a new term, one which would normally be characterised by the final gearing up for GCSE examinations, the rhythms of revision classes, the rush to fill vacancies for September and the combination of hard work and excitement that characterises summer terms in schools and colleges. This year it will be quite different to normal for all of us.

We are four weeks into what will be a long-haul situation. We are moving from the initial phase to the main or adjustment phase. **We hope that pupils are settling into a rhythm after some weeks and beginning to look a little further ahead.** Of course, the situation remains fluid and, as such, the extent to which this happens depends on what occurs at a national and local level. If and when a more settled rhythm emerges, **this is the time when we should consider how learning has been going, what adjustments can be made and what longer term planning may be required.** With this in mind, we have changed our strategy somewhat.

We want all our students to be able to continue to make progress with their education during the current lockdown. We also want this to be as simple for families as possible. It is important, therefore, that the work being set each week is clear and students and parent/carers know which work to complete. We are fortunate to have Doodle as a communication platform and to have already had it in place before the crisis. We can see almost all our students have been using Doodle in the previous few weeks and we are asking teaching staff to continue to set work via Doodle moving forward. To supplement this communication, it is our intention to also send you a "Curriculum Newsletter" each week and our first edition went out last Monday. We would like to thank parents and carers for the feedback we have received so far.

- Each week there will be a Curriculum Newsletter which will include key tasks for students to complete.
- There will be a weekly KS3 Cross Curriculum Challenge – This week it is a Music Challenge for our Year 7 and 8 students and next week there will be a History Challenge.
- We will produce a weekly KS4 Core Challenge for Years 9 and 10 – This week the Core Challenge is Science based and students can select work in that challenge which is appropriate for them.
- The House Captains will set a Challenge/Competition each week which all students can attempt.
- The KS3 Pastoral team have also designed competitions to for KS3 students to enter. A new challenge/competition will be set fortnightly.
- We will also ask all teachers to set work via Doodle for each lesson or set a mini project for the whole week.

- Work and queries can also be submitted via the subject emails, which are on the school website, so staff can offer direct support where required.
- The Pastoral Team will continue to contact parents and carers and please remember that the school is open every day if you wish to contact us for any support.

We have made these changes so it is easier for Parents and Carers to have a clear overview of the work set each week and we also really want to engage the students with the work we are setting so we are trying to make it fun where we can.

We are really pleased to see our students sending in examples of the work they are completing to the subject email accounts. We are also launching Office 365 for students this week. We have had to be really careful in choosing platforms to communicate with students as a number of platforms raised serious safeguarding and security issues. Attached is a guide on how to launch Office 365. This will make it easier for students to submit their work.

This week also saw the BBC launch increased content on the BBC Bitesize website <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize> and the Oak National Academy place lessons on their resource hub. <https://www.thenational.academy/> Please feel free to access these additional resources.

Taking care of your mind as well as your body is very important while staying at home. You may feel bored, frustrated or lonely. You may also be low, worried or anxious, or concerned about your finances, your health or those close to you. It is important to remember that it is OK to feel this way and that everyone reacts differently. Remember, this situation is temporary and, for most of us, these feelings will pass. Staying at home may be difficult, but you are helping to protect yourself and others by doing it. Below are links to some websites which may be of help to you at this time.

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>

or

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/looking-after-children-and-young-people-during-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/>

We have received information from the Department for Education regarding how GCSE grades will be awarded this year. The staff are beginning the complex task of inputting grades, which will then be moderated by the exam boards. Rest assured that the staff will use a wide range of data, supported by the teachers' extensive experience to complete this task.

Thank you to everyone that is making PPE and other NHS equipment. Howden staff are coordinating a huge effort to help where we can in supporting the NHS. We also managed to give out 80 Easter Eggs to NHS Goole and 30 to the COVID 19 transport team who park up at the school. Finally thanks to everyone who has sent in their Desert Island Disc choices, it has been great to read about so many great songs and experiences.

Please stay safe and look after each other.



**Mr G Cannon**  
**Headteacher**