



Noadswood

Dear all,

How's the week been for you?

What a week! I jump between feelings of so much joy – yes, really! – at seeing you all, at being back together, and back in the classroom – to feelings of tummy churn, as we get through each day hoping this won't be the day when someone in the school community gets a positive test result for C-19 and this version of the normal we've managed to put together comes under strain.

I wonder what's on your mind? It might be having to be taught in a particular part of the school, it might be having to come in and out of particular gates, not seeing people from other year groups, wearing face coverings, using sanitisers.... The list goes on.

But I need to give you the most heartfelt thank you for getting on board with all of the rules we've got in place. I know there is huge debate out there – now that this pandemic has been with us for so long – about which rules are right and is guidance on point. I have my own views on that, as all your parents will have, too. But all we can do, as a school, is stick to the guidance sent to us, and do our all to keep Noadswood running as brilliantly as it has this week.

So don't be the person who comes in through the wrong gate or who crosses in to someone else's zone. Be the person who sanitises in and out of every building in our school, and who follows all the right cleaning processes in classrooms when staff ask you to. Stay in the right places outside.

And if you feel comfortable and able to, pop on your face covering when you're in corridors, any crowded places, anywhere where you might need to be close to other people. If you don't feel able to do that, we get that, but if you're ok with it, give it a go, as you've seen adults do around the site as the week has gone along.

I am beyond grateful to you all for this – never think I don't realise how massive an ask it is, to turn your world upside down and have school include stuff like this. Parents sometimes write to me about the impact this is having on your wellbeing; please reach out if that's true for you, and you can ePraise me or speak to any member of staff if that's the case. We're all here for you. Just because it's in the guidance and we have to stick to it doesn't mean we think it's easy on any of you.

What I try to do is focus on it all as ways we pull together as a team, as the Noadswood family. That's what you've done this week and I couldn't be more proud.

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Arrivals to school:

I've been out on the gates this week to greet you, as lots of us have, and I wonder what your thoughts are about the crowded pavements on Water Lane nearer to Orchard? We have had people needing to walk in the road, and people having to wait, which is both not the best start to their day and also not great at a time when keeping a good distance from each other is a win, according to the guidance. No one has been doing anything wrong or behaving poorly, but it's not something we can continue with as it is.

So I need to remind you, please, can you do your absolute best to do two things for us:

- 1) Arrive just before your start time, if you possibly can.
- 2) Go straight to your tutor base when you do arrive, no hanging about for mates or for a chat.

I hope we can work together to make that tweak next week, guys, because this is the one thing that really isn't working for the community yet.

Great to see you at work!

Over and above all, it's just been so great to see you back at work again, with your teachers. There have been loads of brilliant stories passed to me about how things have been going.

One I particularly loved was about the class that worked in silence while the teacher made her way to the zone from another part of the school but started chatting once she was there; when she joked with them about this, one person said, 'Well we're used to independent learning now!' ☺ You are all so super adaptive and have been such a pleasure to work with this week.

My own English class were knock out – they're in Year 8, and they were able to discuss with me with real balance and maturity the many, many good things our police do in our country and some of the things that seem to bother us in society about some incidents we hear and read about. Such a good discussion.

Every week, I will be asking colleagues to give some of you a shout out for me to put into these letters – a version of what I was doing when we were all working from home.

So just some of this week's superstars are:

Finley H – politeness and consideration for other people

Ethan T – amazing, hardworking, friendly, taking everything in his stride

Billy C – resilient, mature work

Stanley – pleasure to teach

Megan L – polite and pleasant in all she does



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Mrs Sullivan's Yr 11 French class – you guys are awesome! Smiley, pleasant, immaculately-mannered, conscientious, interested, good-humoured, generally gorgeous - not too shabby at all, is it?

Big shout out to this week's stars – you can nominate students or staff for me to mention in these letters, or you can still send me your work or your pet pictures!! **All you have to do is email** headteacher@noadswood.hants.sch.uk

What I would love is to see loads of emails, but hear about nobody having a go at someone online or in person who gets a mention in this letter. Now, more than ever, this is a time to pull together and celebrate just how brilliant you guys are. Of course we can't mention all of you, but you all have my pride in you and care for you, so don't dilute that with any unkindness or shade thrown at anyone. I will speak to you about it if we find it going on.

Your Head Boy and Head Girl's plans for our school and student voice

Harvey and Annie have met Mrs Dossett and me this week with their plans for their first projects of the year. One of them is an exciting plan for our school environment and the other is a wellbeing plan to help and support you. Looking forward to telling you more about that in the near future.

I will also be pulling together small groups of students in each year group in the weeks ahead to discuss with you how you're finding things on site, and how you're getting on with your learning and your wellbeing now we're back together. In addition, I will be speaking to Wellbeing Ambassadors (by year group of course) to set you off on some small but important projects to help us look after your year groups as well as possible. Look out for invites soon.

If the weather is decent, we will speak outside, and if not, we will meet in a large space according to all the rules we follow everywhere else on site, but I can't wait to speak to you.

Better Health – Every Mind Matters Campaign and our own Frog Wellbeing Portal

We know that many families – including us staff - have experienced upheaval of a host of kinds in our daily lives during the pandemic. In today's bulletin from the Department for Education, we have been sent information about the new Public Health England (PHE) **Better Health – Every Mind Matters** campaign that provides NHS-backed tips and advice to help young people's mental wellbeing, as well ideas to help out parents and carers with the knowledge to support you. Check it out at:

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters>



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If you do, let your tutor or House Leaders or Miss Harwood, our ELSA, know what you find useful.

I'd like to remind you about our Wellbeing Portal on Frog, too – remember you just have to type in wellbeing in to the search bar to find a host of resources we have assembled for you. Sometimes it's easier to have a browse at home than it is to speak out to someone. We understand that and so those resources are there just for you.

I am super proud that this week, a member of this school reached out to someone on the staff worried about the mental health of someone else. What a fantastic friend that young lady is. It didn't surprise me, knowing her, but it's such a brave and important thing to do. If you're anxious about someone else, please drop one of us an ePraise message or ask for a quiet word. We will be sensitive but we will make sure that person gets the support and care they need.

Next week's letter will include some shout outs to superb members of staff, it'll include some of your work, more names of superstar students and updates and reminders, as we need them.

In the meantime, keep safe, keep doing what you're doing to look after each other and drop me a line on ePraise or email if you'd like a chat about anything – we can do that now!

Have a great weekend, and enjoy some updated pictures of my beloved cats – can't say the three of 'em have changed a whole bunch since last term. They still know how to relax better than any of us!

Miss Marshall ☺

