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Dear all,

I hope that you have been lucky enough to have had even nearly as good a week as I have had! 😊
Y10s back in school:

It has made my week to see every Y10 who's taken the decision to join us back in school for some socially distanced face to face time in 'bubbles' of 12. They've been enjoying their learning in English, Maths and Science as well as some reflection time with us, then they go home for some online live lessons in their options subjects.

Some of them also came back in today for some smaller group clinics in some of their options, too. For instance, I was speaking to Mrs Hockings this evening who told me how brilliantly well her Y10 linguists did with their listening activities today, and how good it was to see them all and be together. Even working at 2m distance is so much better than not working genuinely together at all.

I met with each group of 12 students Monday to Thursday to welcome them back and to give them some assurances and some messages about self-care, which I want to share with you all now:

Firstly, I want to assure you I don't know more about what will happen about next year's GCSE and BTEC exams than any of you do – as headteachers, we receive a bulletin from the Department for Education every day, which informs us of policy decisions that have been made, taking into account the state of play with respect to the virus and other considerations around safety and quality education for you all. So the day we receive the confirmation about the exams, I promise you will know.

I can share with you the current thinking on that, however (crucial word 'thinking' – not decisions). The thinking is that those of you in Y10 will take your exams next year, if things continue to progress gradually better and better as we all hope they will, but we may also be asked to provide some assessment info from within school as well to take account of this time you've been learning away from the classroom. Let's wait and see if we're right about that! What ever is decided, you will know promptly.

Secondly, when the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, announced today that the Government do intend for you all to be back full time in school from September, we actually heard that at the same time as you did: on the news. So let me reassure you, we share that ambition soooooo completely, and we will keep you updated all the way as to the guidance we will be provided with to achieve this safely or if things change, because of the virus, as the summer continues.

Let's keep the faith that we really will be back together for the new term – so exciting, and plenty of time for us to address the worries that I know some of you will have, too. But we will also model how best to deliver your education if we can't all come back full time, so that you know what's planned.

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I also asked the Y10s to pause and reflect on how brilliantly they are doing, coping with the global crisis that this virus has caused and continues to cause. I told them that I consider young people to be affected massively by what has happened. You're at the point in your lives when you need your independence, and real clarity about the world around you as you head towards your GCSEs. Instead, you've been handed confinement and muddle, and, even worse, you don't know when it's going to end. I congratulated them – as I do you all – for sticking with it and cracking on as best you can each day, but I also urged them to focus on how they really feel about it all.

Get involved with some great self-care:

I'm saying to you all, stop and think how you're doing. Are you doing ok? Are there questions you'd like to ask us as we make the decisions about your school life going forwards? Do you need help with particular things on your mind, whether those things are school based or not? Are you anxious or scared? Even if you're doing fine, does an idea about what would make life easier for you play around in your head? Or maybe you've had a really good idea already and you're acting on it, but you haven't shared it with us. Why not really carry out the biggest act of self-care you could and reach out to someone else with what's on your mind? Ask the questions you need the answers to and push for the ideas you want to see through. I am listening, and so are your House Leaders, your tutors and all of the staff, not to mention your parents and friends.

Are you getting closer to your goals?

I told Y10 about a woman called Dr Edith Eger, who, as a 16 year old girl, coped with the horror of time in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp, and comments on how it can be after the worst of a crisis has passed that our mental health takes the worst knock. We do ok during the hardest times because our survival instinct kicks in and we manage to be brave and strong, but a bit later, it's harder to process what we've been through.

So she puts some questions to us all to help us really live our best lives, no matter what has just been thrown at us:

'What am I doing now? Is it working? Is it bringing me closer to my goals, or further away?'

Ask yourselves those questions, and maybe journal the answers, then get in touch with someone who can help you with your worries, ideas and ways to get closer to your goals.

Some highlights of recent work and efforts:

I want to start by congratulating Josh for his excellent Streetfood Project for his mock coursework – Mr Freeman shared with me that he was the first student to get this work in on time, to a really high standard – there's someone putting the structure and effort into his day to get him closer to his goals, even in these challenging circumstances. Well done, Josh!

Next up, Erin wrote to me to share with us the good news that the stables where she rides -Quob Stables - have reopened and so she's been able to get back on with her riding of Kia, a 15 hands horse who is part Welsh. **Kia and Erin are pictured here, doing very well with their flat work.**



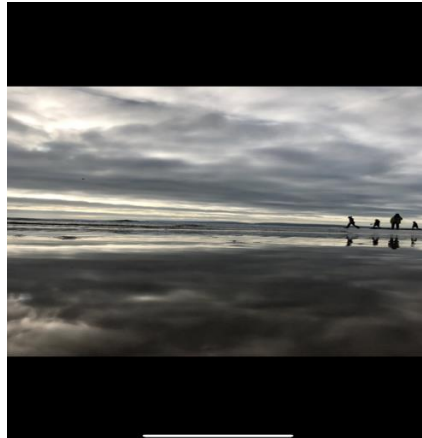
Robbie sent me week 12's work (superstar!) and **Matthew sent across to me his great 'chef in action shots'** for the summer interhouse cookery challenge – he's making fajitas, Mexican style wraps, and it all looks fab:



Here's some of this week's **pop art** success, sent to me by Mr Wilkinson by **Amelia, Faith and Isaac**:



And I love this atmospheric photography by Laia – I really love the use of silhouette in this work:





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News of all the provision for you over the next few weeks:

From Monday June 29th, Y7-9 students will have a timetable of live lessons delivered by a range of our teachers that you will be able to join through Microsoft Teams. You will receive a clear calendar of when they will be, and your other work will be linked to those lessons. This will be a good opportunity for you to come to grips with using your school email regularly and with using Teams. All instructions to follow, and we hope you're going to really enjoy these lessons as a central and timetabled part of what you're working on.

Y10 students will continue to have their time in school, their live online lessons in their options subjects, some live online coverage in core subjects, too, plus those Friday clinics for some people. As you know, Y10, you attend school for your face to face time on different days, depending on your bubbles, and your Foundation online lessons will be scheduled as now. But your core online lessons can't be according to a timetable because it couldn't be the same for everyone – instead, we'll suggest a route through the week that will work for you.

Keyworker provision will continue as now and I am looking forward to seeing all of you guys more next week – I caught sight of you on Monday as you were on your way out to play some basketball. There's a strong sense of team amongst you – some of you have been working in school throughout the lockdown and I am extremely proud of you.

Head Boy and Girl Interviews:

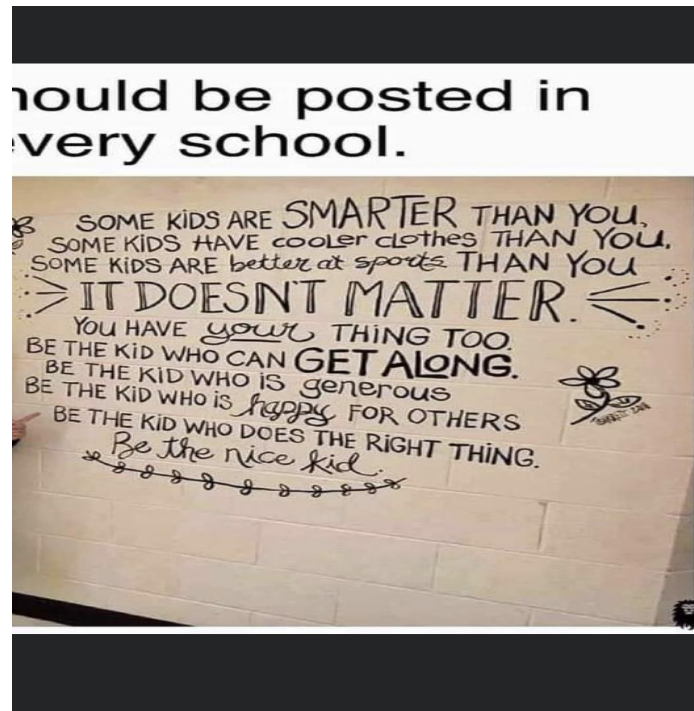
Mrs Dossett and I would like to congratulate Harvey Wilkins and Annie Richardson on becoming your Head Boy and Girl for 2020-21, fending off very tough competition from 11 other superb candidates. Your level of preparation, maturity, commitment to our school and progress since we first knew you blew us away, all of you. We can't wait to work with you, Harvey and Annie, but we also can't wait to work with all of you on your top ideas for our school. More news will come from the House Leaders soon about the appointments of their House Captains and Vice House Captains. Exciting times ahead.

Ellis and Becky, your outgoing Head Boy and Girl, came in to school to see us on Thursday to help with the welcome for our new Y7s by recording a film for them, and Harvey and Annie will be doing similar work with us on Monday.

Annie shared this inspiring message with us as part of her interview which I hope will chime in with most of us about the power of team and kindness:



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Would you like to give a similarly positive message to our new students to welcome them? It's so hard for them this year because they can't come to see us as they normally would, but we're putting lots of lovely stuff for them up online from lesson activities through to videos galore so if you'd like to join in, just drop us a message at transition@noadswood.hants.sch.uk

Lots to look forward to and lots to plan for, but, like I said at the start, please make sure you share your ideas and your worries with us, just like all the head boy and girl interviewees did – we loved hearing from and learning from them. Drop me a line at headteacher@noadswood.hants.sch.uk because I really want to hear from and respond to you, and real thanks to everyone who got in touch this week, as always.

See or hear from you next week – I will be writing to you once a week now I am back on site through the week, so don't forget to push the pets, the work and your ideas my way ready for a Thursday or Friday letter of our best fun and efforts! Have a good weekend, stay safe and take best care of you,

Miss M