

Dear parents and carers,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. It is a difficult time for us all, but the staff and students of CCS have more than stepped up to the challenges faced by remote learning. Feedback from parents and students has been overwhelmingly positive about live lessons and the interaction this gives students in a time where they are few and far between. I hear that the use of Teams 'breakout rooms,' which give students the opportunity to discuss ideas, have been a big hit!

Managing workload

You will have received a letter regarding children's mental health week, 1st-7th February. This was also posted on the year 11 Team, with numerous activities focusing on mental health and well-being (one of them was washing up after dinner; I wonder how many teenagers will see that as a positive activity?). With this in mind, we are conscious of students' workload and the need to look after themselves with rest, fresh air and exercise.

It is important that students don't spend too many hours working. They should attend every live lesson, spend the allocated lesson time doing the work, and then submit the work at the end of the lesson. We are concerned that some students are working far too many hours. While we admire their work ethic, their well-being is more important. It can be hard for teachers working remotely to know how long a piece of work will take, as we pick up on so many visual clues in face-to-face lessons. If your son/daughter is finding the workload for a particular subject difficult to manage, please encourage them to contact their teacher to explain. We are always keen to receive feedback and will help the students to prioritise their workload. Although it is tough going at the moment, students are actually learning key skills for their future study and career in terms of independence and resilience.

Winbooks available

We have purchased over 1000 Winbooks, to help students without appropriate devices. It is extremely difficult to complete work on a phone. There was a communication sent to parents informing them of this opportunity two weeks ago and I have also posted it twice on the Year 11 Team. If your son/daughter is in need of a Winbook, please complete the form in the link below and make a £50 deposit via ParentPay. Parents would need to collect the laptop with ID (full instructions are in the form).

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=-RwkYclZfkOajLIVMVszGXqGMkDq0-tAo6Q5nPFZqPxUQUptQVdCRFNES0VWMIZRVkJKWjZJOFhHUy4u>

Secondary: 01604 669200 **Primary:** 01604 669210 **Website:** www.ccs.northants.sch.uk

Principal: David James **Vice Principals:** Andrew Fisher Katherine Patterson Gary Wakefield

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The Wooldale Centre for Learning, Wootton Fields, Northampton NN4 6TP

Revision sessions

I am pleased and proud to report that we continue to run English, Maths and Science revision sessions over the lockdown period, which will run until Easter. These sessions are financed by the Covid catch-up funding allocated to schools by the government. Each subject has invited targeted students who are expected to attend these sessions. English sessions have been running since early November, and Science and Maths sessions started in the last two weeks. Parents have been informed if their son/daughter is among the targeted students, and students have been notified.

Teacher Assessed Grades (TAGs).

We have not heard anything further from the DfE about TAGs. We do know that teachers will need evidence on which to base their grades, and please be assured that the PPE grades only form one piece of that evidence. We would encourage students to continue working to the best of their ability over this period as we simply don't know how they will be assessed. There may even be some form of external assessment. The consultation period ended on 29th January, so we hope to be provided with further details in the not too distant future. As soon as we know anything, we will communicate this to parents and students.

Some students have found their exam timetable on Insight; this should be ignored. The timetable appears because even though there will be no GCSE exams, students still have to be entered for all their subjects with the relevant exam board in order to receive a grade.

High Performance Learning

Big Picture Thinking



'The ability to work with big ideas and holistic concepts'

The High Performance Learning focus for the week of 8th February is Big Picture Thinking.

Being able to see the significance of what they are learning and how it connects to the wider world. Encouraging children to want to learn even more and take interest in what they are learning and how it fits into a bigger world picture than just school and exams is crucial if they are going to engage and succeed. It is a critical part of operating at an advanced level.

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Prom

Prom has been booked for Friday 25th June at Whittlebury Hall. We are keeping everything crossed that it will go ahead, but of course we cannot guarantee it. We will have to wait for government guidelines closer to the time.

Parents' Evening

You will have received a letter this week about a virtual parents' evening for year 11 next term. We will update you with details as soon as we can.

Thank you for your continued support, and stay safe.

Yours faithfully,

Lowri Briggs

Progress Leader for Year 11