Dear parent/carers,

**Week 5 of the National lock down**

As we enter week 5 of the new national lockdown, we think it would be a good time to communicate as a federation leadership team.

We know that there is still much uncertainty about when schools will return to some kind of normality and that this won’t be until the 8th March at the earliest. We hope to know more on the 22nd February.

Many of you are trying to juggle managing home learning or having to attend work in your critical worker status and children having a place in our schools. Whatever the situation, it is not easy for any of us as things are different and can be challenging for us all. The weather isn’t helping us either; it is nowhere near as kind to us as in the first lock down when we could spend quality time outside.

So, we thought it would be nice to say a big thank you for all that you are doing as a parent/carer and a member of the community. So much of what we are experiencing at the moment is uncharted waters and we all find ourselves having to respond to changes, sometimes at short notice.

At THS there has been a positive response to our online learning provision and where possible we are trying to follow the same curriculum for the children who are in school as well. School is different for everyone at the moment, whether learning at home or actually being in school, and students are adapting to the changes in their learning environments.

As a school, we have been monitoring closely how students are engaging with their learning from home. It is perhaps the case that your child has completed work for their lessons whilst in the Google Classroom but hasn’t successfully submitted their work to their teacher for various different reasons. However, it may be that your child is not fully engaging with their remote learning. We have created two new alerts on Go4Schools, RLE (a positive point for good Remote Learning Engagement) and RLC (Remote Learning Concern) where we have a concern that work appears not to be have been submitted.

I understand that this correspondence might be the cause of frustration for some families, however the government has instructed schools that it is their duty to monitor students’ engagement with remote learning and to intervene supportively and non-judgmentally where concerns are raised that a student might not currently be able to engage fully with their curriculum in some subjects.

We accept that 100% engagement might be difficult to achieve for some students given the challenges families are facing as a result of the pandemic. The purpose of the RLC alert is to continue to try to establish a dialogue between us, to explore how we can work together to further support you and your child to engage with remote learning for as long as it remains the only way in which your child is able to access their education.

Lateral flow testing of staff continues to take place at the High School and this week we have introduced testing for primary colleagues as well. So far, across the federation we have identified 5 positive cases of Covid-19 from asymptomatic colleagues as a result. We will continue to implement this testing programme in line with government guidance.

Hopefully we will be able to share some positive news with you all about the return to school soon. In the meantime, we hope you’re able to encourage your child to get some time away from the computer screens if this is their daily experience.

We want to continue to promote positive mental health with every student, family and member of staff within our school community. However, we are aware that working in this way has added pressures on everyone and balancing education and positive mental health habits are still a priority. As it is Children's Mental Health Week, we would like to take this opportunity to receive feedback from our whole school community to continually improve provision during this lockdown period. Please click on the link to complete the parent survey about remote learning. The link for the student survey is also here but we will also be sending it to them via their school email account.

Parent Survey

<https://forms.gle/evmrx9jHuzrYfhvK7>

Student Survey

<https://forms.gle/V2ps9ei7o2UUeu8D8>

Please be kind to yourselves in this difficult time. Someone once said you shouldn’t compare your chapter 1 with someone else’s chapter 20. We think we’re all on chapter 1, if we’re honest. We are together in this; we are all trying our best, and we’re facing stresses and challenges that are new to us.

Once again thank you for all that you are doing to support your child’s learning and the community of Tiverton during these challenging times.

If there is anything we can do to support you further please don’t hesitate to get in touch with us.

Kind regards

Sammy Crook
Head teacher
Tiverton High School