

29<sup>th</sup> January 2021

**HEAD OF SCHOOL:** Mr I Bacon

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am sure that you have picked up by now the Prime Minister's announcement that schools will not now reopen until 8<sup>th</sup> March at the earliest. I don't think this announcement comes as much of a surprise given the grim situation in the country at the moment but nonetheless it is disappointing for all of us – students, parents, and teachers – that there is a further delay in welcoming the children back to Watling.

This is a difficult time for everyone, and I know we are all working hard, together, to maintain some continuity of learning for the students. Thank you, as always, for playing such a crucial part in supporting the efforts of Watling staff to maintain a semblance of educational normality.

### **Remote Learning Survey**

Thank you to all of you who contributed to the survey and gave us some really helpful feedback on what is going well and what we could consider doing differently. Please find below a summary of some of the key questions...

97%	said that they understood how to access the remote learning
89%	said that the instructions given by teachers were clear and helped them complete the work independently
100%	said that they were able to contact teachers if they had questions about the remote learning
92%	said that they thought that the level of challenge of the content was about right
87%	felt that the pace of learning was about right and helped them feel secure in their learning
94%	said that the live teaching elements helped them understand the subject content more easily
100%	said that they understood expectations of conduct during live lessons and handing work in
84%	said that they were happy with the feedback received from teachers
84%	said that the amount of work set was about right
84%	said that they were able to communicate with their friends outside of lessons

As with all surveys there are always different points of view and opinions and we are meeting as a staff after school on Monday next week to consider any potential changes we can make in the light of the comments. One key area we are looking at is opportunities for students to contact each other socially.

**Respect / Responsibility / Kindness**



WATLING ACADEMY C/O FAIRFIELDS PRIMARY SCHOOL, APOLLO AVENUE, FAIRFIELDS, MILTON KEYNES, MK11 4BA

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## **'Off-Screen' day 2**

The feedback we had following last Thursday's 'Off-Screen' day was overwhelmingly positive and as a result we have decided to designate another at the end of next week – on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February.

Many parents emailed in to say how the children had spent the day so this time I am inviting parents, carers, and students to suggest possible ways that the day could be spent next week.

If you think you have a really good idea or suggestion you would like to share, then please email [admin@watling.academy](mailto:admin@watling.academy) and we will collate them and send them out along with our list!! If we could have your suggestions by 3pm on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup>.

## **Mental Health Week 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> February**

Whilst it is mental health week, next week, we are already very aware of the impact online learning can have on our student's mental health and have tried to put in place strategies to support all students since the start of lockdown. All students are assigned a member of staff to check in with them and with you to make sure all is going as well as it can. During well-being lessons, for the last 2 weeks we have focused on mental health week, including activities based on the express yourself theme. Some of the Origami students produced was outstanding.

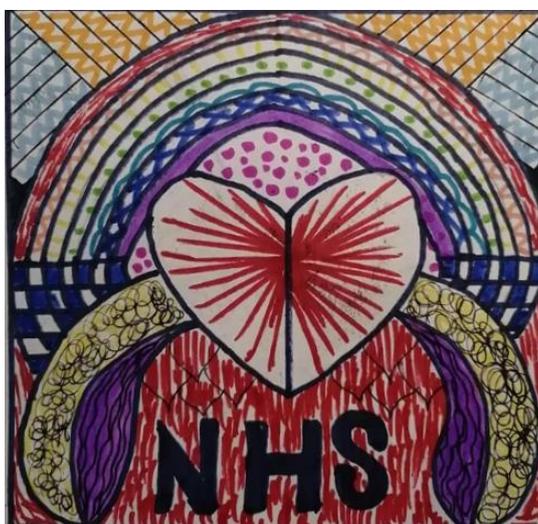
We are planning an assembly for next week on mental health and we are also completing "beat the staff" activities during tutor time which the students are loving.

We are in the middle of planning opportunities that will get students up and about. For example, as a group we are hoping they will climb Everest, walk the Great Wall of China, complete the Inca trail and walk from Land's End to John O' Groats. Watch this space for more information on this.

We are very aware how difficult this time is for all of our students. We are so proud of how our students are coping. If they are struggling please do not hesitate to contact us at school so that we can continue to offer advice and support as required.

## **Art Rainbows**

The students have been creating NHS rainbows in their Art lessons and even though I couldn't track down the names, this one really caught my eye although there were so many excellent ones. You know if this is yours so well done.



Last weekend and early this week we had the excitement of the snow and I hope that if your children were so inclined, they made the most of the infrequent opportunity to 'play out' and engage safely in snow related activities. A modest sized snowman appeared in the Bacon household back garden but sadly all remnants have now disappeared. If you have any snow/snowman photos, then I'd be pleased to see them so send them in to [admin@watling.academy](mailto:admin@watling.academy)

I'm not sure what the weather holds for us this weekend, but when Saturday comes, encourage your children to switch off from their Watling learning and make the most of some down time.

Stay safe, stay well,

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'M' followed by a long horizontal stroke that ends in a small dot.

Mr I Bacon  
Head of School