



Celebrating the Heys Community and Key Dates

Dear Parent/Carer,

We hope this letter finds you and your families safe and well. We wanted to share some information with you regarding some of the many positives happening at the moment, which are hopefully of a benefit to your child as they adjust to learning from home.

Firstly, school is open for our vulnerable students and our students whose parents / carers are key workers. This remains the case and we are offering a full day provision to all students who meet this criteria, and will continue to do so until we can open our doors fully again. If you would like to discuss a place for your child, please contact our main school office and your request will be directed to the appropriate staff member. We are pleased that we are able to offer a hot food service to students who are in school every day, which we were unable to also do in the summer.

After our Christmas hamper drive in December, which enabled us to provide packs of festive provisions and essentials to the families of over forty families, we had donations of around £400 left over from staff and friends of the school. This fund has been used to re-stock our food bank and we now have around 30 food parcels of non-perishable essentials ready to deliver to any families in our community who are experiencing difficulties and in need of some support. Please do not hesitate to contact us as we are keen to help and support in any way we can. We have already delivered 10 food parcels since Christmas and hope to continue to support our families in this way as long as we are able to.

We have moved to a system of almost entirely remote learning and our pupil's engagement with this has so far been amazing. We regularly share our students' successes via our main school and faculty Twitter feeds and would love for you to follow us and celebrate with us. We also use the Twitter feeds to share other information with our Heys community such as tips on maintaining good emotional well-being and how to stay safe online, where to access support within our local area and other relevant news and community items that you might find helpful. We also share school projects such as The Heys Bake Off, a fun weekly cookery challenge set by our Food and Nutrition teacher, which students can take part in by following a recipe at home and submitting their completed dishes for judging. We have had some great entries so far on our twitter page which can be found @schoolheys!

Since March 2020, to support with online learning at home, we have been able to provide 154 laptops to students who were identified as technically vulnerable due to not having a device on which to access their lessons. We have managed to meet the requests of all parents / carers who completed our survey plus a considerable number more. Furthermore, we have provided every student with an exercise book to use at home and all our Year 11 students have personalised CGP revision packs with resources that they can use to support their learning and independent study. As a school, we have also invested additional funding into providing devices that will help our students to learn at home and to feel connected to school and the community. We have recently purchased forty tablet devices which are pre-loaded with a 30GB data SIM for any students who are struggling to access online lessons. The first allocations have been met with home deliveries taking place on Wednesday 27th and Friday 29th January.



We are constantly looking out for other projects or ventures which will benefit our students. Consequently, we have signed up to the BBC Make a Difference Project which aims to link people within our local community with devices to donate, with school students who need them. We have also requested data SIMS through the Vodafone – Stay Connected Programme. We received a total of 90 data sims and have provided just over 60 of these to students and families needing an internet boost while everyone is learning at home.

Our teachers are evolving their practise all the time and are regularly sharing tips and resources to help them improve their online teaching, with websites such as Whiteboard.fi, Kahoot, Mentimetre quiz, PuzzGrid, use of Teams assignments, Wordwall and others being used to provide lots of variety and stimulation for our students to enable them to engage positively with their learning. We hope that students are enjoying these platforms for learning and the variety that teachers are striving to provide in lessons. Teachers have delivered 53,920 online lessons over the past 3 weeks, made 720 support calls to our students, form tutors have carried out a virtual meeting with students in their form, we have issued 79 free school meal vouchers and we have tested 19 students and 32 staff.

Due to an upgrade to our network infrastructure in school, our emails and other systems will be inaccessible on the following dates:

- Thursday 4th February
- Friday 5th February
- Thursday 11th February

As part of mental health and wellbeing awareness week, KS3 students will be emailed activities on the 4th February focused on this topic.

On the 5th and 11th February KS3 students will be set work and class teachers will email students in advance of the 40-minute independent learning. For all of the dates above KS4 students will be set work and teachers will email students in advance of the 40-minute independent learning.

School will be open to key worker and vulnerable students on the dates above, however online lessons will not take place and instead students will be involved in planned activities away from the computer screen. School will close for half term on Friday 12th February, however timetabled online lessons will continue to take place on this date.

Students will return to online lessons on Tuesday 23rd February as Monday 22nd February is compulsory statutory safeguarding training for all staff. This will mean school will be closed for key worker and vulnerable students and online lessons will not take place on this date.



The Heys School

Finally, we wanted to make you aware that the government has announced they are working towards schools reopening to students on 8th March at the earliest. We will update you with more information in the coming weeks.

Thank you in advance, for your support in realising the greatness of every member of our school community.

Yours sincerely,

Mr R Singh
Deputy Headteacher

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For those parents of key worker and vulnerable students, please return this slip by Monday 1st February 2021, to indicate whether your child will attend school during network downtime.

Name of child _____ in Form _____

Please select the dates your child will attend school during network downtime.

- Thursday 4th February
- Friday 5th February
- Thursday 11th February
- My child will not be attending school during network downtime.

Name of parent / carer (please print): _____

Signed by: _____

Headteacher | Miss R Evans, BA (Hons) NPQH

Realising Greatness