

Dear Y8 and Y9 students,

I hope that this message finds you all safe and healthy.

You've now had approximately a week away from school and I really hope that boredom hasn't kicked in yet. Things are going to be like this for a little while longer yet so it's important that you accept things for what they are in these unprecedented times and try to do your bit to help us all get through this as quickly and as safely as we can.

Firstly, be sure to keep up with the guidelines which the government are sharing with the public and try to follow them. Being away from your friends isn't great but this situation will pass so just stick to social media for now. You shouldn't be meeting up with friends at this point and this should be the case until the government says it's safe to do so. Wash your hands regularly and speak to your parents or guardians if you are concerned about things. Speaking to people is a really good thing in these strange times.

Secondly, you've all been provided with work from school and this should cover most of your subjects. There may seem to be an awful lot of work to begin with but remember that it all doesn't have to be done straight away. Think about:

- Doing work on the days you would normally have that lesson.
- Pace the day out. Work for about an hour then take a break. Go back to work again and repeat the process.
- If you're not sure what to do for the work contact your teacher via 'Show My Homework' directly or contact me and I'll try to get your questions answered.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions.
- Try to work in the same neat, careful and positive way in your books that we would normally expect of you. Continue to take pride in your work.
- Visit sites like Seneca, My Maths, Kerboodle etc regularly to be topping up your knowledge and understanding.
- Think about forming study groups with friends (online or via your phone). This could be a great way of helping each other and extending your understanding of subjects.

Thirdly, take this unusual opportunity to learn new things and skills whilst you're at home. Could you develop your cooking skills? Spend time in the garden helping out? Learn how the washing machine works!

Seriously though, although these are challenging times this could be a great opportunity for you to become that little bit more independent and learn about things you'd never really thought of before. Give it some thought.

Importantly, try to be as helpful as you can at home. This situation isn't easy for anyone and the grown-ups at home will have concerns as well. The key things are to try to help each other out, talk to each other and try to be as supportive as you can. It won't always be easy but people will appreciate the efforts that you make.

Finally, use your free time wisely. Make sure you're reading a book and try to limit time spent on games consoles if that's your thing. Same with social media. Limit your time on it and whilst on it try to be a force for positivity and kindness to others. At a time like this we need to show others the very best of ourselves.

Take care and be safe.

Mr Whitehurst