

Weekly News Update Friday 5 February 2021

We have a lots of news today...

Bad Weather Arrangements

As weather forecasts are predicting snow and very cold weather conditions, we thought it would be timely to remind our students, parents and carers of the school's procedure in event school closure owing to adverse weather. Please check the SLG and website if there is heavy snow.

Teaching and Learning in Lockdown

This week was children's mental health week and this year's theme was 'Express Yourself'. During lockdown we know how much students are missing being part of the school community. Although they can't be with their friends we are all still here for every young person and I know tutors have been making calls, emailing and touching base with their form groups. The Art Department have launched an exciting creative project asking the whole community to express themselves in thread. See below for more details.

For parents and young people, you may find some of the following links useful ([mental health resources](#)) which includes support for young people who feel particularly overwhelmed by the pandemic.

As you know from last week's news, we have planned a day of learning so students can get a break from their screens. To start the day the PE department will be doing a LIVE PE YouTube workout on Friday 12th February at 9am. The lesson can be accessed by using the following link - <https://youtu.be/Rw9h5WMflo4>

Some class teachers may set work for this period, so please make sure you check before joining the Live PE lessons.

ICT developments

As we further develop out ICT strategy in our school, we now have enabled the synching of OneDrive into student and staff profiles in the school. The new O drive will enable synching between work completed at home and be accessible in school from their desktop. This will enable better functionality on the Teams assignments page and provide cloud backup as well.

We are also aware of the issues with keeping safe online with people spending a greater proportion of time being spent online. Next week is safer internet day and the link below has useful videos and links for students to access with yourselves.

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2021/i-work-young-people>

Dr Danahar – A tribute

Our friend, colleague and champion of the natural world, Dr Dan Danahar, will be retiring from teaching after 21 years at Stringer. Although Dr Dan leaves us at the end of this half-term (Friday 12 February), we will be having a formal leaving celebration for him at the end of the Summer term, when we will hopefully be able to give him a decent send off. In tribute to Dan the Science Department will devote the off-screen science lessons on 12 February to the RSPB Big Schools Birdwatch project.

Students will be sent a bird identification chart and asked to look out of a window or into their garden, go to a park or field, and note down the number of birds of each species that they can see at one time on that day. They will then input their numbers into an electronic form (tiny bit of screen time) so we can collate the results. We will then share that with the RSPB.

More information will be supplied to students by their Science teachers nearer the time.

Environmental success

We are delighted to announce that we have successfully secured our 9th Green Flag, Eco Schools' top award. This puts us into a very small group of schools that have held this status for 20 years. The Green Flag award is based on the work that has been done over the 2 years since the last award. Although we were limited in 2020 the work we did in Autumn 2018 and throughout 2019 was enough to illustrate we are deserving of the award. The Eco Committee, coordinated by Mr Sandercock, is made up from students from all year groups. They meet on a regular basis and discuss ideas about how we can improve the eco credentials of our school. One successful project in 2019 was turning old Pringles tubes, which are renowned for not being recyclable, into pen recycling pots. Two students designed a covering for the tube that explained what could be recycled. They were then distributed to teachers' classrooms. The collected pens, highlighters and board markers will now be recycled rather than go to landfill. Our Year 7 Environmental Science lessons continue to impress the Eco Schools assessors. This unique course utilises the wide range of habitats we have developed on the school grounds over the last 20 years, connecting the next generation with the natural world and showing them how we can increase biodiversity if we give nature a chance.

Attitude to Learning Awards

Congratulations those Year 8 and Year 9 who have received Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze ATL awards on their latest report. We have distributed the Platinum awards, but the Gold, Silver and Bronze award letters will be kept in school and presented to students when they are back.

National Apprenticeship Week

National Apprenticeship Week is 8 -12 February, and we will update our website with further information about this career route. However, we thought that you might like advance warning of an event that the MET is hosting. There are Zoom chats in

these subject areas on the following days. You can find out more by following the link to our website:

<https://public.dorothy-stringer.co.uk/ds/Pages/apprenticeships.aspx>

Keeping Creative during Lockdown

The Art Department is extending an invitation to the whole school community to take part in a Big Stringer Community Tapestry project: *Threads of Lockdown Life*. The tapestry will be a snapshot of life during lockdown. Individual artworks will be joined together to make a huge historic piece made by students, parents, carers, staff and all the families and friends of Stringer. The completed *Threads of Lockdown Life Tapestry* will be displayed in the school. See Lockdown Tapestry PDF attached.

Word of the Week: Maverick (noun) - A person who thinks and acts in an independent way, often behaving differently from others

Take care and stay safe.

Matt Hillier

Reminder: please complete the [School place register form](#) if your child requires a critical worker/vulnerable place next week.

Important Dates

Friday 12 February – take a break from your screen day - no live Teams lessons

Next half-term

- Monday 15 - Friday 19 – Half-term break (school closed to all students)
- Thursday 25 February – Year 11 Parents' Evening – Virtual using school cloud system

[Please Note: For all Parents' Evening, **school finishes at 2.15pm**, to allow for preparation for the evening. During lockdown teachers are also likely to set work during Period 4 rather than teaching an online lesson]

- Monday 8th March – proposed phased return to English schools from 8 March
- Thursday 18 March – Year 7 Parents' Evening – Virtual using school cloud system
- Thursday 1 April – End of Spring term