22 June 2020

Dear Year 7 students, parents and carers

I hope this message finds you all safe and well. We have now entered our eleventh week of remote learning and our thirteenth week of lockdown *(that's nearly three months!).*

**Last week Walthamstow School for Girls welcomed back students for the first time since the end of March.** While this was a big step in moving back to normality, we are still a long way away from having all 900 students back in school at the same time. Government rules on social distancing, hygiene and sanitation mean that at the moment it is impossible to reopen as fully as we would like, or as quickly as we would like. But the fact that we are starting to welcome back students is clearly a good sign and a step in the right direction. **The students who were on site were delighted to be back in school and to see some familiar faces.**Hopefully it won't be too long until more of you will experience the same mix of emotions the Year 10s did last week.

As I said last week it will probably take a quite a while for things to return to normal. One day it will be the turn of Year 7 to return to school and see the *new normal*, until then we ask you to **stay vigilant and keep learning at home** (as you have been doing so thus far). Until that happens there will be times when it will feel challenging and frustrating, but we ask for your continued patience and your support.

As I'm sure you have seen, society seems to be slowly reopening. Shops have begun to open their doors to customers again and high streets are slowly becoming busier by the day. This helps to remind us that while we are going through a difficult time at the moment, it won't last forever. **One day students at school will study the coronavirus and how it impacted society. You will be able to tell them what it was like and how you coped. I hope you have some interesting stories to tell!**

**Since many of you will not be going on holidays this summer, you’ll need to be well occupied!** We’re delighted to tell you that [EAST Summer School](https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-story/get-involved/education-and-young-people/east-education-summer-school) is still going ahead this year in an online format. EAST Summer School is a completely free programme for 12-17 year olds who live in the local area and want to have fun while learning a new creative skill in the summer holidays. Courses will be run by some East Bank partners including the BBC and UCL, as well as established local organisations such as The Yard Theatre, Studio Wayne McGregor and Staffordshire University London. Since being ‘live’ for less than two weeks, EAST Summer School has already had over a hundred potential applicants register their interest – which is great to see! You can register [here](https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/our-story/get-involved/education-and-young-people/east-education-summer-school). Full programme and timings will be available soon.

**Here is the Speakers for School schedule this week**[**VTALK Schedule**](https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/)Speakers include a top celebrity hair stylist, an Oscar nominated writer and director, and the UK/EU General Manager of TikTok. Please consider taking the time to watch some of these if you can.

The WOW Global 24 Online Festival is taking place this weekend. [The WOW Foundation](https://thewowfoundation.com/) is 'Women of the World', a charity working to build a global movement celebrating women and girls, exploring obstacles they face and discussing solutions for change. The worldwide online festival this weekend has been created in response to the deprivation and inequalities brought about and exacerbated by Covid 19.

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| [The WOW Foundation – Women of the World](https://thewowfoundation.com/)The WOW Foundation. The WOW Foundation is a charity working to build a global movement celebrating women and girls, taking a frank look at the obstacles they face and discussing solutions for change. Its WOW Festivals and events take place year-round across around the world.thewowfoundation.com |

**I would recommend you** [**read the Day**](https://theday.co.uk) **to catch up on all the latest news.**This week there are articles discussing the tragic killing of a History teacher in Reading at the weekend, toxic masculinity and more discussions on the BLM protests.

I hope you have managed to slip back into your weekly work routine. **Please remember that if you have subject specific questions or need any help with your assignments, please use the Team chat to ask your teacher.** If you have any general school issues or you are having problems with Teams, please contact us at info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk

Just a reminder you should be spending **no more than three hours completing schoolwork each day,** and approximately **one hour on each subject.** Don't worry if you don't complete every single piece of work every week, just let your subject teacher know that you didn't have time to finish it.

Remember to**set your alarms** for 1.30 p.m. on Wednesday and Friday so you are registering on time this week. I will pose another challenge for you to have a go at before your next tutor time on Wednesday.  **Please encourage any of your friends who forgot about it to join in this week as it is very important that everyone stays connected.**

Just a reminder that **you should all be reading and completing your quizzes for Accelerated Reader.** While some of you have used this time away from school as a great excuse to really dive into the books you love, others have sadly neglected their reading. Do try to make time each day to read a book or magazine (or something not on a screen!). Not only is it relaxing and fun, it will also help with your wellbeing and you might even learn something along the way.

**As more and more shops open up it is especially important to stay alert as the risk of coming into contact with someone who may have the Coronavirus increases every time you come into contact with someone. So please try to ensure that you not only look after yourselves at this time, but also look after each other**. Continue to follow the same precautions that you should have been taking all this time (wear a face mask, wash your hands, try not to make unnecessary journeys).

Every week we are setting you tasks to do that I'm sure are taking up a lot of your time, but don't forget to make time for yourself as well. **Your mental health is just as important as your physical health** and it must not be neglected. So please don't spend all your time working, you need to take regular breaks, exercise and have fun too.

Once again, I remain hopeful that we will see you again before we are due to break up for the summer holidays, but school will only fully open when it is safe to do so.

Until then stay safe, stay alert and keep learning!

Take care,

Mr Morrow

Student Progress Leader Year 7