8 June 2020

Dear Year 7 students, parents and carers,

I hope this message finds you all safe and well. We have now entered our ninth week of remote learning and our eleventh week of lockdown. I trust you enjoyed the good weather last weekend and are slotting back into your weekly routine to continue your remote learning.

Last week was the first week back at school for thousands of Year 1 and Year 6 students across the UK. It appears that the restart has been relatively successful, and I'm sure that plans are being put in place to expand the number of students who can head back into school. As I suggested last week, **there is still the possibility that you could yet be asked to come back into school before the official summer holiday starts in July**. If that happens, then I can reassure you that every precaution will be put in place to keep you safe. But until then we ask you to **stay vigilant and keep learning at home,** as you have been doing so thus far.

I'm sure you have been watching the news over the past week and are aware of the **massive public protests across the world in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.**In the UK at the weekend there were major demonstrations in several cities, including a huge one in London. These were in response to the deaths of several unarmed black men and women in the USA recently, most notably George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery.

**While these killings may have been the immediate catalyst for the recent protests in the US,** **the real causes go back much further and are much more complicated.** They involve a number of historical factors such as discriminatory laws, unfair economic factors, discrimination based on race, ignorance, intolerance, fear and racism. Unfortunately, there are no easy solutions to many of these systemic problems, and there are no easy fixes.

However, while the events that have played out on the nightly news since the death of George Floyd, and the subsequent violent response by many of the police have been scary, in some ways they have also been inspiring. **Never before in my lifetime have I ever seen such a mass movement of people over a single issue: Racial Justice.** All over the world people marched to show their leaders that they would not support violence, brutality or discrimination.

**In the UK all students are taught about the fundamental British Values that we all have in common: Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance of different cultures and religions.** These protests remind me how important it is that we try to live our beliefs and not just talk about them. It reminds me of how important it is to stand up when those beliefs are being threatened. It reminds me of how important it is to make yourself heard to ensure that everyone in society can have a voice.

While it may appear that we are going through some dark times at the moment, **similar massive protest movements in the past have resulted in positive long-lasting changes in society.** In the 1830’s and 1840’s the Chartist Movement in the UK eventually lead to representative democracy. In the late 1800’s and early 1900’s the Suffrage Movement in the UK lead to Women winning the vote (in 1918). In America in the 1950’s and 1960’s the Civil Rights Protests lead to the Civil Rights act of 1964 which allowed African Americans to vote. **Remember, the night is always darkest just before the dawn.**It may be that we are witnessing the dawn of a new era of peace, equality and progressive policies.

**Hopefully these protests can be a historic moment of positive change for our generation, and students in the future will look back on 2020 as a time in history when the world changed for the better.**

If you would like to know more, then I suggest you read through the information on the Day: [https://teams.microsoft.com/\_#/school/tab::22354a66-ed9b-47a4-857b-e090e99c7208/General?threadId=19:35948a499d8946649c9083b7f0f8175b@thread.skype&ctx=channel](http://email.groupcallalert.com/ls/click?upn=QCt39MGknLdX8WJ-2BJIlsl-2BRmzqiyjTePTdTn1OH-2FoW2ZZldv-2FD4fRakga0uT-2B-2FS9wCfDIQu5On1xtUS9JI6V5HfoN94fnOzi7rJHbkuKQyCtGq0nHhalhKl1HLGLcnW16xjRFixHfGxuulgX8uyEoAB-2BqVmMV0TIuwOgkC9EGRwEHXqSg-2Bz7DV2h5wL5i47Sxi9kFVx8s5lqI0puLLAaZ4VDzBe2UuL2E4UEnWam4pg-3DOIBS_hO0-2BjBU1wZkGYJxm5s2PR9uDPFHgtDgeumeaNixTD1qZpK2y4tpUAUW-2FB84u2rW8w3H5Dwig7k1r4gp3gEltPK8XbG159FbZBd4rNPo8sVizT-2F-2BDYOsSvW0nQ5k4jFAcqNB4D7pKYAVca4CkU9NdNVFzuz47PU9S6sRhA8dQkCPpmlKI9jejXXYnqZkrEzHFAGHvTVrD4KlhzNy4XW0-2FMg5NM001O0Njf3y60AgulN4XGz2KXxjZJTtqSeWpo8eBLNw5ZyvQTI68G0w-2FFNx3PgFQIF71RMEMrL184s9f2QWXhALoLeh-2BrrrxFEtyFjZWRxr5LuUp8VOCNB6ZQkfwqDGOOl5Tmgtx-2B743Q6sA33OnKmfTLumo-2FPOzkCIW9-2BfeAEObesYWbMBMsRwU76cVAS7mNre3qe3DKc7nahPjHaU-3D)

**Over the next few weeks some of your teachers will be setting you work of related to Black Lives Matter movement and the current events unfolding in the USA.**

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 that 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, **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 you also look after each other**. Continue to follow the same practices 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 that I'm sure are taking up a lot of your time, but don't forget to make time for yourself as well. 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 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