29 June 2020

Dear students, parents and carers,

I hope this message finds you all safe and well. We have now entered our twelfth week of remote learning and our fourteenth week of lockdown.

Over the past couple of weeks Walthamstow School for Girls has been open for Year 10 students to return to the classroom. **This partial reopening has been very successful**, but it has also been a strange experience for both the staff and students involved. While it has been exciting for students to see their teachers and their friends for the first time for months, **it is also a reality check as to how much school has changed since March. It has provided a window as to what education might look like in the future.**

The social distancing guidelines mean that there are now fewer students in each room, and they are more spread out when they are in class. This may mean one class that has thirty students may need to be split into three separate rooms. It is obviously not going to be possible to do this with every class (as we simply do not have enough space in the school to operate in this way). **While everyone is hopeful that we can return to a fully open school in September (as education secretary Gavin Williamson promised last week), it does seem unlikely at this moment.** If school is not back to normal in September, then we will have to revaluate how we deliver remote learning in order to ensure it is as effective as possible. This may involve some changes to how we set, record and assess work whilst in lockdown. If we do decide to make changes to how we deliver remote learning, then we will keep you fully informed of the changes as we go.

As I have said previously, 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.

**Over the next three weeks you can expect to receive a phone call from your form tutor**. They are going to call home for every student to have a talk about your first year at Walthamstow School for Girls and see how you are getting on in lockdown.

**From Monday 6th July it will also be possible to collect your iPad from school provided your family have complete the paperwork and paid the deposit.**This means you will be able to complete your work on your iPad at home and take advantage of all the software already installed. If you have any questions about collecting the iPad then do please get in touch via info@wsfg.waltham.sch.uk

**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 and learn 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.

[**The Speakers for Schools programme**](https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/) **this week**includes talks from Mark Maciver, the barber responsible for styling the hair of Stormzy and Anthony Joshua, authors Marlon James and Ekow Eshun, and an event celebrating women in engineering who work for Thames Water. Please do sign up to watch some of these inspiring virtual talks if you get the chance.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | [Upcoming Vtalks - Speakers for Schools](https://www.speakersforschools.org/inspiration/vtalks/upcoming-vtalks/)Speakers for Schools are excited to present our weekly VTalks schedule! This schedule will be updated weekly and talks will be targeted to different age groups and is accessible via the links below. To view anonymously, click the on Vtalk link in the schedule below and select: (Watch on the web instead > Join anonymously). Watch how to join the VTALKwww.speakersforschools.org |

**I would recommend you** [**read the Day**](https://theday.co.uk/) **to catch up on all the latest news.**This week the articles include a feature on Liverpool football club, Virtual Pride Parades, how the economy will recover from Covid-19 and more 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 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.

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