

3rd April 2020



TANFIELD
SCHOOL

HARD WORK | TRUST | FAIRNESS

Dear parent/carer,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. We are now into our second week of school closure with children working remotely from home. It is starting to sound like school may not be back to 'normal' until after the summer break, so I thought it would be a good idea to update you all on the current situation and highlight some of the provision available to support you.

Staying Safe These are strange times, unlike any we have experienced before, so the most important thing is to make sure all of our families are safe and sound. Please make sure you are following the government guidance correctly and avoiding all unnecessary travel or contact with others.

Communication The school help email is checked Monday to Friday should parents/carers have any queries or concerns. Even though we are not always in school we aim to deal with issues in a timely manner. The school email address is: help@tanfieldschool.co.uk. Our website will keep you up to date with many things and we use Twitter/Instagram/Facebook to share quick messages.


Mental health It is more important than ever to stay mentally healthy so the following is some advice to help children, but it applies to all of us:


- Get some regular exercise: Do a daily walk or bike ride. We have a lot of children and parents doing the PE daily workout. Just make sure to stay 2 metres away from anybody not in your household.
- Eat as healthily as possible: This is a great opportunity to get your children involved in cooking!
- Keep talking: discussion is a healthy activity and a good way to help the children understand the current situation and deal with their emotions.
- We are recommending a free app called **Kooth** that is being promoted nationally for children's mental health and has been shared with our students previously.
- Our learn at home website: learnathome.tanfieldschool.co.uk has links to the wellbeing Google Classroom and access to a secure confidential chat service with our school counsellor, Lynsey Todd, should the students need it.

School work We appreciate that this can be difficult for parents but you have our full support in ensuring the children keep good routines and stay on top of their school work. What we do know is that Tanfield children are used to working hard and completing a good amount of work every day.

TANFIELD SCHOOL
HEADTEACHER Steven Clough BSc (Hons) NPQH

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Staff are available every working day, online, to support children with the work they have set. We are using Google Classroom as the central place to access all the resources available to the children. Those who are having problems accessing the work can email the help email at help@tanfieldschool.co.uk.

We would like to thank you all for ensuring your child does the work set, to the best of their ability. This is really important to ensure they don't come back to school behind their peers.

Safeguarding Our normal safeguarding principles are in operation so please report any welfare concerns you have to us. Children working online need to be conscious of their safety and should remember their online safety lessons. Don't forget the report it button on our website. If anyone is having difficulties please let us know, as we may be able to help or at least direct you to the people that can within the local authority. Issues can be reported to our Designated Safeguarding Lead Mr. Jones at cjones@tanfieldschool.co.uk or the number for Durham First Contact is 03000 267979. Finally, you can call the police on 101.

GCSEs You will be aware that GCSE examinations this summer have been cancelled. Guidance about how results will be decided has been released today and sent to year 11 parents separately. We would just like to reassure parents that we will be doing everything that we can to ensure students are rewarded fairly for their work.

Key workers We would like to thank all the members of our community who are key workers at this time. We are all grateful for the work being done to keep supply lines running, food shops stocked, deliveries made and elderly or vulnerable people cared for as well as all the key services that keep us safe and sound. We would also like to thank you all for continuing to follow the government guidance to keep your child at home when it is safe to do so.

House competition Over the Easter holidays, it is important that students and staff have a break from the usual routine of work. However, we also know that this is not going to be like any other school holiday. Therefore, we have created a house competition on google classroom. This can be accessed using the code **ktszilc**. We are hoping that this may provide a bit of fun and avoid any boredom. There are 100 tasks and we would love to see all of the family getting involved in. Evidence of tasks being completed can be added to the classroom and we will use this evidence to award house points. We would love to share some of the best evidence on our Twitter, Facebook and Instagram pages.

Free School Meals We have issued vouchers to all children in receipt of free school meals, for the two weeks before Easter. The government is now launching a national scheme that we will sign up to after the Easter holidays. However, we are going to ignore the Government guidelines to support those families entitled to free school meals during the holidays.

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At the moment, the Government has declined to reimburse schools, but it is something we intend to fight. Please keep us informed of any changes to your address or contact details.

Year 8 Options After the Easter break we will be starting our options process. There will be an options booklet shared with you shortly. We are also looking at how we can run an options evening using google meet. Details will follow soon.

Supporting the NHS We would like to thank all the amazing NHS staff doing great work on the front line of this particular war. This week we have collected and donated all of our safety goggles and gloves to the Durham Community NHS Trust.

Finally We would like to thank you for your support, your kind words, and your actions. I am so proud of the way that each and every one of our students, parents, governors and fantastic staff has stepped up to support each other.

On behalf of all the staff and governors of Tanfield School stay safe and well.

Mr Steven Clough
Headteacher



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