



1st February 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

I do hope that you and your family are well. All the staff at Stafford Manor High School do not underestimate the challenges you are facing at home. Supporting your child with their education is not easy, especially when you have additional responsibilities and commitments. However, please remember that every single thing you do to get them ready for work each morning, and then the support you provide through the day, certainly does help. Staying at home does appear to be having an impact on transmission rates of coronavirus, and this is ultimately keeping us all safer from the virus.

I am sure you are aware that towards the end of last week the Prime Minister announced that it will not be possible for schools to resume face-to-face learning immediately after the February half-term, and instead hopes it will be safe to commence the wider opening of schools and colleges from Monday 8th March. It has also been made clear that we will all be given two weeks' notice to prepare for a return to face to face education. Therefore, we hope to have clarification of Government plans on Monday 22nd February. Everyone at Stafford Manor High School is very much looking forward to the time we can safely welcome back children through the gates. Please be reassured that as we have done throughout this pandemic, we will continue to prioritise your child's safety when they can return to school

The number of children using Teams to access their learning at home and seek 'live' support from their teacher continues to grow. It is great to hear the positive feedback from children and parents that lets us know that Teams is having a significant impact on supporting learning and motivating youngsters at home. Our teachers are continually developing their skills and approaches to ensure we continue to provide the very best quality education during these challenging times. It is vitally important that children are ready for the start of the day and we ask that all children 'check-in' with their teacher at 9.00am by sending a message, preferably through Teams, to let them know they are ready for the first lesson. Please do continue to do all you can to support your child in completing their work and don't hesitate to contact us if you or your child needs any assistance or help – we are here for you and will do all we can.

In line with Government guidance school will be closed as usual over half term to all pupils, including vulnerable children and children of critical workers. School will reopen for these children on Monday 22nd February. We will continue to trace contacts of any positive cases during the half term period in case we need to instruct individuals to self-isolate. Regardless of whether your child is currently attending school or learning at home, please do inform us if they should test positive for coronavirus. You can let school know by emailing c19@smhs.staffs.sch.uk.

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Since the second week of this term we have been issuing families whose children are eligible for free school meals with a £15 weekly supermarket voucher through the national scheme. Over half term, Staffordshire County Council will once again put in place an alternative scheme that will keep this support running through the holiday period. Once term resumes on 22nd February the national scheme through Edenred will return. If you are currently not registered for free school meals, and feel you may be entitled to apply then all the information can be found at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals. If you are unsure and would like someone to help you check whether you are eligible then please contact the main school office.

This week we have discovered a 'Kindness Pack' that has been produced by The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport and the British Red Cross. This is a great booklet that could help to support you and your child's health and wellbeing through these difficult times. It contains lots of ideas and activities that you could complete together with your child. You can pick and select what you might feel is useful and do as much or as little as you like. It might provide a nice opportunity to spend some quality time with your children away from school work and focus on something a little different. It is vitally important that we all do our best to keep a healthy mind as well as a healthy body.

When we are experiencing challenges we all need a little friendly boost at times. Small acts of kindness can go a long way to making someone feel more positive about their current situation. If you know someone who would benefit from a conversation over the phone, a chat and a smile on Zoom, or even a wave across the street – these actions could really make their day. If we all help each other then we all benefit and will feel more positive about the days and weeks ahead. Please remember that you can always give us a ring and ask if you need a conversation or help at home. Our main school office is open every school day during normal hours. Stay positive and stay safe.

Yours sincerely



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