



29 April 2020

Dear Year 8 Students and Families

It's Miss Chandler and bump here! I hope that you are all staying safe and healthy during these strange times. I have been trying to spend more time in the garden, less time staring at computer and TV screens, have been decorating the nursery with homemade bunting, and have even learnt to play some new songs on the piano. I know, like many of you, that it has never been more important to look after myself, both physically and mentally, and I wanted to write to you at the start of this term to share some information that is designed just for you and your fellow Year 8 students.

### **Miss Chandler's tips for a successful school day at home:**

- I always set an alarm so I don't lose any of the day and I am ready to start work early
- I get up, and get washed and dressed, to feel more proactive
- I have breakfast to give my body and brain the energy they need
- I find a suitable workspace, away from distractions as far as possible. I sit at a desk or table rather than on a sofa or bed – this helps me feel mentally prepared to focus on work

### **Keeping on top of SHMW**

So far, I have seen some excellent engagement with work online. Well done to those of you who have been able to submit your assignments. Miss Goodes has seen some great work from 8R when making films for their 'Jaws' media project in English and lots of lovely examples of the whole year group spending quality time with their loved ones as part of the English Easter holiday homework! Mrs Sage was really proud of those students in 8S who attempted some tricky expanding brackets work. Mrs Liles reports that last term 8B described coastline, using really interesting adjectives to give a really clear idea of what they saw and even smelt! It was wonderful to read about all the different places they have visited, from the Jurassic Coast to Dymchurch. Many of you have also been joining in with Joe Wicks on his daily YouTube workouts, keeping yourselves busy in the kitchen, researching and recreating Mediterranean dishes, and learning how to describe what you are wearing in Spanish, on Quizlet.

As we move in to Term 5, I will continue to monitor the work you are completing at home in all subjects and we will aim to speak to you and your families on the telephone every two weeks. It is vital to ensure that we maintain regular contact with our families, ensuring that work is still being accessed and completed and that we can monitor student wellbeing. Staff will try to call during the working day but may call outside of this if they are struggling to contact you. Please be aware that the call may come from a private or withheld number.

I know there have been some teething problems for some of you but I hope that the new timetable is already making things easier for you. You should remember that:

- You now have a work timetable for each weekday, which looks different to your normal timetable. These are the subjects that should appear on your SMHW calendar each day and which will be due within 24 hours. When you log in to SMHW, you should always start with calendar view for an overview of the day's tasks. You can find guidance at <https://help.teamsatchel.com/en/articles/2911891-student-calendar>. **You should stick to your new timetable each day, to help you stay on track.** These assignments are designed to take you 45 minutes each and should be completed within 24 hours of them being set. Check your work thoroughly before submitting it and message teachers individually on SMHW before the deadline if you are unsure about what to do on a particular assignment.

- If you are using SMHW on your mobile phone, you may have difficulty submitting work online. If you would like to set up SMHW on a laptop or computer to submit work more easily, but can't remember your login details, and for any other ICT queries, please contact our ICT support team by following this link <https://hayesbrook.on.spiceworks.com/portal/tickets>
- if you are struggling to upload work you can find some guidance here; <https://help.teamsatchel.com/en/articles/2912000-submitting-my-work-online>
- When producing your own research-based work, try to avoid wikipedia pages. These can be edited by anyone and are not always trustworthy. If in doubt about the types of resources to use for a certain subject, send the teacher a message on SMHW and they will give you some suggestions of credible websites. Additionally, ensure you are not unintentionally plagiarising work and make sure you always write up your research in your own words. Don't use words you don't understand – look them up in an online dictionary and use them only once you are confident with their meaning. And no copying and pasting!

#### **Life in Lockdown – Mrs Concannon's tips for looking after your mental well-being:**

- be kind – to yourself and others – this is new and strange for everyone – there is no right or wrong way to get through this. Do your best and support the people around you. It is ok to feel uncertain or worried about things – but make sure you tell someone (at home or at school). There are lots of people around to support you.
- give yourself structure – build in time to work, time to rest, time to relax, time with your family and, just as importantly, time with yourself. Only you will know how much of all of these you will need and it will probably change from day to day. That is alright, too! It may be tempting to sit in front of a screen all day but this can negatively affect your mood. Engaging in a variety of activities is much more likely to release endorphins and give you the feel-good factor!
- learn from this – not just all the important school stuff! Learn a new skill – juggling, painting, magic tricks. These things often take perseverance and resilience, which are important qualities for all of us to keep developing. Learn what really makes your family happy – you offering to do the washing-up without being asked or maybe just a quiet walk in the woods.

I hope that you will find time to look after yourselves and your families in these ways. Be selective with what you read. Stay informed with the news but don't let it consume you. Look for light-hearted and inspirational stories to share too. Think of 100 year-old Captain Tom and all the stories he has inspired with his efforts. And don't forget to clap and bang those pots and pans for all frontline NHS staff and other keyworkers at 8pm each Thursday too.

Stay safe and happy.

Miss Chandler  
Head of Year 8