

# Newsletter – 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020



**Sheffield Park Academy**  
The best in everyone™  
Part of United Learning

Dear parents and pupils,

I hope that this issue of our weekly newsletter finds you all well and that you are coping with the demands of social distancing and lockdown as well as possible.

This week we have been working hard to get free school meals vouchers out to as many of our families as possible and to further develop the online learning resources on our MS Teams platform. We are aware that there have been some ongoing difficulties for some families in accessing or using the vouchers and will keep doing our best to make sure the system works for you. It is clear that it is a massive undertaking for the Department for Education and Edunet and demand has been such that their systems have struggled to cope. We are seeing signs that things are improving and the vouchers are getting through now but please do communicate any issues with us and we will do our very best to help.

As well as ensuring that our current Year 11 and 13 pupils' outcomes and progression routes are secured, our attention has also been on ensuring that robust plans are in place to enable other year groups to catch up when they return to school, especially the Year 10 and 12s, who will move into their 'exam year' in September.

We have also been working closely (online) with our colleagues from the primary schools to put in place an alternative to the usual 'early risers' programme.

With the news last Thursday that the lockdown has been extended for a further 3 weeks, hopefully we are now entering the final straight and can get back to as near to normal as can be achieved relatively soon!

I am extremely grateful for the efforts of all of our teachers in ensuring that distance learning is now fully up and running. It is really important that we make the most of the Summer term to ensure that pupils do not fall behind. I have been very impressed with the way that the overwhelming majority of pupils have adapted to these new ways of working and, with staff continuing to provide close support, the term does have the potential to be a very productive one.

To make sure that pupils' efforts are recognised, we will be continuing to celebrate all the fantastic work going on at home and look forward to hearing and sharing updates from you all throughout the term. I also fully recognise and appreciate the efforts being expended by our parents to make sure that the online learning is being accessed regularly - thank you for your continuing support in that respect.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to say a huge well done to those pupils from both Park and Springs who have continued to attend school. I have been keeping up to date with your activities over Twitter and have been really impressed with your enthusiasm and positivity as well as the quality of the things that you have been baking and making.

I am sure that you will have seen on the news that today (20th April) is the launch day of the 'Oak National Academy', which is a collaborative effort between our trust, United Learning and a number of the other large academies groups from across the country. The website can be accessed at <https://www.thenational.academy/> and contains video lessons and online work for all of the national curriculum subjects from primary through to Key Stage 4. We will be signposting pupils to some of these resources in the course of our distance learning programmes over the coming weeks but please do feel free to access the website and all of the resources contained within in. You don't need to sign up and all of the resources are completely free.

With best wishes,

Mr C. Dillon,  
Executive Principal



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## Welcome from the Principal

We heard on Thursday in the Government Daily Update that the 'lockdown' will be continuing for a further three weeks. Although this is a very sensible move it does mean that the online learning students complete is even more important. We have altered the timetables slightly to ensure all subjects are studied and also have introduced a daily reading session for Y7-9 students. Please send us pictures of the work being done and we can include them in the newsletter. If you have any issues with accessing the online resources please contact school and we will be able to support you. Please take care and stay safe.

Mrs D. McShane  
Principal

### Timetables

- Y7 – Y9 <https://www.sheffieldpark-academy.org/Portals/0/TT%20Y7-9.pdf>
- Y10 <https://www.sheffieldpark-academy.org/Portals/0/TT%20Y10.pdf>

## Year 9 Options

Y9 pupils will be choosing their GCSE options online this year. Subjects areas have produced PowerPoint presentations explaining the content of their subjects. Parents will receive a letter this week outlining the details of how this will happen and where to find all the information.

## Year 11

### Sheffield South East VI Form

Recruitment for September is now underway and all qualifying students will receive their confirmation letter next week. Please ensure you read the letter carefully and respond with the required information by Thursday 30th April to guarantee your place. If you have any questions please contact us via our VI Form email [sseviform@unitedlearning.org.uk](mailto:sseviform@unitedlearning.org.uk)

## Free School Meal Vouchers

You will have gathered from the media that there have been a number of issues with the FSM voucher system coping with the demand from the country's schools.

We can confirm the following:

- Postal vouchers for the 2 weeks of the Easter holiday were posted on Friday 17th April to all of our eligible families who opted for this method of delivery.
- Email vouchers for the 2 weeks of the Easter holiday have been 'released' online and are gradually being received by those families who opted for this method of delivery. We have been checking regularly and, although the website is very slow at times, we are reassured that all of our orders have been received and actioned.
- Following DfE advice, we have placed an order for 4 weeks' worth of vouchers in one submission; the status currently shows them "in progress". These will be released to our eligible families in due course.

If you are having any issues with the above or if you are having (or know of any of our families who are having) difficulties due to an inability to access benefits or FSM vouchers, please do not hesitate to contact us in confidence using the [info@sheffieldparkacademy.org](mailto:info@sheffieldparkacademy.org) email address and we will do whatever we can to support.

## A level and GCSE Results Days

The DfE have confirmed that results will be available on the following dates. However, as yet we don't have information on what format this will take. We will keep you updated as soon as we have more information.

- A-level results day - Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2020
- GCSE results day – Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August 2020

## Virtual Trips

After learning about Podcasts in the last edition we are now running a number of virtual trips. These will be signposted by your form tutor weekly.

Also in the folder is a trip review sheet. Many of the exhibits have links to Wikipedia where further information can be found on the exact exhibit. There is much to see and do here and it is well worth a visit. There is something that will interest everyone.

## Podcast supplement

After signposting to podcasts last week please do have a listen to the 13 Minutes to the Moon Podcast from the BBC World Service. They have two bonus editions on there at the moment from the ill fated Apollo 13 trip. The second an interview with the brilliant John Aaron who was the Flight Controller for journey. Very pertinent now, he states;

"Quit dwelling on this being impossible, ask yourself what you have to do to make it possible. Accept what you have and quit commiserating about that. Now figure out how you are going to get yourself out of this..."

John Aaron Apollo 13 – Flight Controller