



High Tunstall College of Science

Inspire | Support | Achieve



Headteacher: Mark R Tilling

Deputy Headteachers: Peter W Hayward and Laura Ovens

April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I do hope that you are all well and keeping safe. It has been a strange Easter break where we as a College have continued to operate and support all of the community when needed. We have now provided the Local Authority with all PPE we have available to help out in the care sector and will be looking to do as much as we can moving forward.

I would like to start with a big thank you to you and your children. I have been immensely proud as Headteacher of High Tunstall College of Science of the way in which every single family has engaged with us since we closed for the lockdown and I know that continuing to work together we can try to continue to maintain some sense of normality to our lives. Without your support this would not have been possible.

High Tunstall College remains open to provide care for key worker and vulnerable children as defined by the Government. However, we are here to support you all and we will recommence our calls and teaching of the curriculum from Monday 20th April 2020. If you require our support please just ask, that is what we are here for.

It has been great to see so many posts on social media from students who have engaged with all the fun activities over the Easter break. I am sure like me, at such a difficult time you have enjoyed some of the light relief. Well done to all and I look forward to sharing the prizes with the young people when we can.

Before the Easter break our main focus of work was on CenturyTech. We have listened to what parents have said and we are now reducing our reliance on that tool and are asking you to get your son or daughter to follow their normal timetabled lessons from Monday.

CenturyTech has proved to be a massive success and with over 753,000 questions answered by the students of High Tunstall College of Science in the last 28 days, do I need to say anymore. Well done for being world champions in the usage. Please continue to use Century as you wish, it will help reinforce learning and fill the gaps.

We would advise that school work is performed in 30 minute blocks with a short 5 minute break in between to take maximum advantage of average brain attention spans and focus. The 30 minute work blocks should be sequenced by your son/daughters weekly timetable to give them structure and clear daily aims and goals to achieve in this time period. This behaviour should also become habitual and replace some of the structure that students have lost from the lack of school. When students are working in the 30-minute blocks, this should be in silence to ensure maximum focus and retention of information in an area that is as free as possible from distraction.

All work being set by staff will now be set for a 2 week period. The work will be set in ClassCharts and will be on the system on the Sunday night before the Monday. I have asked staff to be specific on how much time should be spent on tasks and this should be clear on the ClassCharts instructions (so 3 hours on booklet work, 2 hours century etc.). Students will be asked to submit their work to their usual teachers.

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Proud to be a
Schools North East
Partner School



In form time and PSHCE all students will be expected to read, and we will be sending out details as soon as we can on how you can access our new online reading system. Year 7 should continue this through their accelerated reading programme portal.

MyOn is an exciting new platform that the college has bought to help get students reading and learning independently. It provides full access to over 5700 books across all subjects. These books can be accessed and read on smartphones, tablets, laptops and computers. Many of them are graphic novels and should be engaging for students. All books have an audiobook option so your son/daughter can listen to the text to aid their understanding. It will allow reviews, notes, projects and essays to be set remotely and monitored by teachers both during the college closure and when we return. Students at KS3 will be set a reading list across all subjects each half-term and 'Reading' will become a subject in its own right, linked to form time. KS4 students will have a bespoke reading list shared with them which will assist them in preparing for all GCSEs across all subjects. Your son/daughter will receive a username and password to access this platform during the week beginning 20th April 2020. For further information on MyOn and how it can help your child, please see the attached PDF document called 'Parent Guide'.

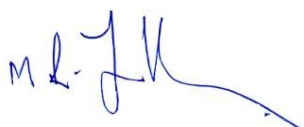
For students who are entitled to free school meals you should have now received 2 vouchers through the Government portal. If you have not received them or/and would like advice please talk to the member of staff when they ring, or alternatively ring the College and speak to a member of staff in the office. If you need to apply for your free school meal entitlement due to your changing circumstances, you should do so through the benefits team at the Local Authority on 01429 266522. This will enable us to give you access to the e-voucher scheme as well.

We would like to remind you that it is really important that all members of our community continue to take notice of the current government guidance on social distancing and only travel when absolutely essential. If we all stay safe within our own homes and follow national guidance, then we will soon get back to some form of normality.

As a family embrace this additional time at home to develop a positive and growth mindset within each other. We are in challenging times but as we have seen people across the country are finding creative and novel ways to support their communities and remain positive and look for aspects of growth; rather than dwelling on the negatives. There are always positives in any situation and the ability to spend more time with our family, the opportunity to allow our children to sleep more and work and learn within natural rhythms are all positives of this situation that can be embraced and utilised to maximise the wellbeing of our community and the learning of our young people.

We do hope that you all stay safe and keep well.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Tilling', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr Mark Tilling
Headteacher