

HOLYWELL SCHOOL

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*A Church of England School
providing a Values Based Education*

Update Letter – 26th April 2021

Dear Students, Parents and Carers

It is hard to believe that we are already into Week Three of the Summer Term. We have had a busy time since our return after Easter and most students have settled back into their routines well. While across education, there is much talk of 'Catch-up' and 'Recovery', at Holywell, we are taking a different approach and talking about: 'Reset, Refresh, Renew, Restart'. Our students have coped really well with the pandemic and during the last lockdown, the vast majority kept up with their work and have minimal gaps in learning. We are working hard to support all students to transfer everything they have learned into their long-term memory and we are finding inventive ways to enable students to cover areas of learning they were unable to do at home. We have used some of our DfE funding to acquire additional resources to enable all students access to resources and equipment they might not have had access to at home and we are refocussing back on 'learning'. New grouping for English and Maths are also helping us to provide some more targeted support in these two core curriculum areas.

Safeguarding and Wellbeing Update

Some students have found the transition back to school a little more emotional and challenging than others. Our Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team and our Pastoral Teams are supporting lots of individual students and families. Please make contact if you notice anything of concern – even if it is something small. Form Tutors are the first 'point of call' and can be contacted via the School Office (school@holywellschool.co.uk or 01234 750 381). To help with the additional demand for support, we are expanding our Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team. Miss Stewart and Mrs Davies continue as our Safeguarding Leads and Miss Collins is now focussing on student support. We have just appointed a new member of the team – Mrs Johnson – who will be joining us soon to focus on student and family support. Mrs Johnson joins us from Northamptonshire where she has been working with Young Carers. She will be a great addition to our team.

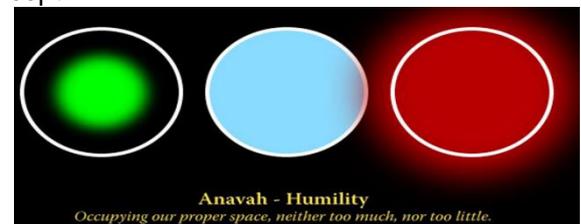


We are also doing some work with all of our students on wellbeing, dealing with stress and resilience. We will be supported by Liz Fordham from a local charity – 'Making Me'. Liz has done work with Cranfield Academy and did a wonderful virtual session for parents at Cranfield and Holywell on supporting students during the pandemic crisis. We look forward to building on that work and applying it to students here at Holywell.

Value of the Month: HUMILITY

Our Value of the Month is one of our more unusual values: Humility. Our Values ambassadors have come up with a lovely definition to help students understand the concept:

- We do not boast about our possessions,
- We do not act like we are better than anyone else,
- We know our own value but do not make other people feel undervalued,
- We try not to get too big for our boots



The Hebrew word: ANAVAH – which is translated as 'humility' has helped us have a helpful focus. The written definition of 'Anavah' is 'to occupy the space in the world given to one from the Lord'. Anavah is not to overestimate yourself and abilities, but nor is it to underestimate yourself, neither. This has been really useful both in terms of how we would like students to behave in school and also, how we would like everyone to be with each other – finding our rightful place in our Holywell community and not 'overstepping the mark' with others.



Headteacher: Mr MG Simpson MA, NPQH

Deputy Headteacher: Mr S Van Der Merwe – Deputy Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead: Miss A Stewart

Assistant Headteacher: Mrs H Donnellan – Designated Safeguarding Lead / SENDCo: Mrs J Davies

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We have had a few isolated incidents of students not being so kind to each other and, we hope, through our work on humility, to address this. In general, our students talk to us in school and their friends are often very supportive and protective. We encourage students to have at least 5 adults in school who can act on their behalf. This is very often their form tutor, but sometimes a trusted subject teacher, teaching assistant or senior member of staff. Sometimes, however, students who are on the receiving end of unkindness do not talk about this and the impact on them. We are hoping that this focus on humility will empower students to have the confidence to speak to someone, to be assertive and to ask for help. If students do not communicate, this can 'eat away' at their self esteem so they feel as if they do not deserve to take up their rightful space in the world; this is NOT the case – everyone in our Holywell community is important to us and we hope that everyone can be proud of who they are. If students mention anything at home, or if you notice any unusual changes in mood, please contact us immediately as often students will appear confident and happy in school.

Uniform

We are continuing our Covid-19 practice of students wearing PE Kit when they have PE lessons (or lunchtime clubs). On days when students are in school uniform, usual uniform is required (albeit with the Summer Polo shirt option). Please check the uniform guidance re: skirts and shoes!

Mobile Phones and Use of Social Media

One of the ways in which some students (and staff) in our community are experiencing unkindness at the moment is through social media. Through the pandemic, we have seen the amazing and positive value of using social media and online games/applications to keep in touch with others. Unfortunately, we have recently seen some negative use of social media with everything from inappropriate language when sending messages to unsafe postings on social media sites. We ask all parents/carers to have an honest conversation with the children about keeping safe online and about the impact of unkind words, irresponsible postings and inappropriate use of images. We suggest that everyone checks their privacy settings and that there are regular checks of conversations in chat groups and during online gaming sessions. We acknowledge that this is a tricky area to negotiate, especially with older students who are starting to want to be more independent, however, safety must be paramount for everyone. There are some information sheets about keeping safe online and an update on current apps used by students on the Safeguarding page of our website (<https://holywellschool.co.uk/online-guides-parents/>).

We would also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that we are a non-smart phone school. Smart phones must not be brought into school. When we first introduced this policy into school, we made the concession to allow students to have a non-smart phone just in case they need to contact parents before or after school. These are cheap and do not have cameras, social media apps. We are able to conduct checks and searches and hope that we do not need to resort to this to ensure that students are complying with our policy. Full details are on the school website (<https://holywellschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Mobile-Phone-Policy-September-2020.pdf>).



The Big Ask

The Big Ask is a survey for children and young people aged 4–17 in England created by the Children's Commissioner – Rachel de Souza. As Children's Commissioner for England, Rachel's job is to speak up for children in England, stand up for their rights, and make sure that the people in power listen to what children need and want. This is the largest ever survey of children and young people in England. The results of the survey will be used to show the government what

children think, and what children need to live happier lives. The survey is split into different age groups, so we can fill in a version appropriate to the age of the students. This is our chance to have our say on the things that matter to us. Students can comment on what life is like, what they want in the future, and anything they think is holding them back. The Children's Commissioner will use what is said to tell the people who run the country or the local area what we think needs to change to make our life better. Mr Crapnell will enable students to complete this in ICT lessons (although the government website didn't quite cope with the volume of traffic so students might like to complete this at home if the system doesn't work in school!). There is also an adult survey open to carers, parents and adults who work with children to complete – this is the link: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/thebigask/adult-survey/>. Please note, that this is a confidential survey and you will not be asked for your name, phone number or email. The Office of the Children's Commissioner will keep what you tell them safe and private – it won't be shared with anyone else. You don't have to answer any question if you don't want to.



Sir Captain Tom's 100 Challenge & Non-Uniform Day – Friday, 30th April

On 6 April 2020, Captain Tom Moore set out round his garden to thank our NHS heroes. One hundred laps later, he'd raised an incredible £38.9 million for the NHS Covid-19 appeal. His simple message of hope – “**Tomorrow will be a good day**” – inspired millions around the world and brought comfort and joy to so many during the pandemic.

Now it's our turn to build on that legacy. Friday 30 April would have been his 101st birthday and to honour him and his amazing achievements, The Captain Tom Foundation would love everyone, of all ages and abilities, to take part in the Captain Tom 100 Challenge. Our Whole-school Challenge will be to contribute 100p (£1) for a non-uniform day and everyone is invited to take on a challenge around the number 100 anytime and anywhere over Captain Tom's birthday weekend.

It's so simple.

- We are encouraging students to think up their own 100 challenge. It can be anything you like – from walking 100 metres to baking 100 cakes or writing 100 letters. If you need some inspiration, [click here](#)
- Take on your 100 challenge any time between Friday 30 April and Monday 3 May ... some staff may well organise something with one of their classes on Friday.
- We will donate our fundraising to The Captain Tom Foundation

**FOR ALL THOSE PEOPLE FINDING
IT DIFFICULT AT THE MOMENT,
THE SUN WILL SHINE ON YOU AGAIN
AND THE CLOUDS WILL GO AWAY.**

- Captain Tom Moore



... and finally, ...

Thank you for all your continued support through this most unusual academic year. Your messages of thanks and support have been well-received. We are grateful to KS3 families for continuing with the Lateral-Flow Testing, to all families for supporting us with the ongoing use of face coverings and for all parents/carers for keeping visits to school to a minimum. Please DO contact us though, if there is anything which with we can support you.

With all best wishes

MG Simpson
Headteacher