

WOOTTON ACADEMY TRUST

Wednesday 15 April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Captain Tom Moore walking 100 lengths of his garden before his hundredth birthday

One of the Wootton Upper School parent governors, Nick Martin, has suggested that the Trust encourages parents/carers to show their appreciation for our fantastic NHS workers by donating to a Just Giving crowd funding appeal. We are delighted to support this request for numerous reasons including it being a great way for those who can afford to do so to make a financial contribution to the NHS and also to support a ninety-nine-year-old, Captain Moore who lives in Marston Moretaine, one of the larger villages in Wootton Upper School's catchment area and of course literally over-looking Kimberley College as he walks one hundred lengths of his garden before his one hundredth birthday later in April.

This morning the amount of money raised by Captain Tom Moore for the "NHS Combined Charities" was £4,250,000 with more than 210,000 donors giving to the charity. By late-afternoon, the total had increased to almost £8,700,000 from 435,000 donors. Truly amazing.

I am sure that many of our parents/carers have already visited the Just Giving website to donate - <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/tomswalkforthenhs>

Wouldn't it be a superb gesture if, on this occasion, *Just Giving* stated any money it raised from *Tom's Walk for the NHS* could also be given to *NHS Combined Charities*. We have all learned much over the last four weeks about the bravery, kindness and stamina of our NHS workers, and other workers in social care, notably staff working in Care Homes

Donating PPE to local care homes

Last week Wootton Upper School was asked if it could provide some goggles, desperately needed by local care homes chronically short of PPE. Whilst it represents a drop in the ocean, I immediately agreed it was the right thing to do and Mr Herridge came into school to collect and then deliver them to where they were needed.

Connolly Foundation – Mrs Ashby, Head of Careers and Connolly Foundation Coordinator

Last week saw the initial deadline set for receipt of Connolly Foundation Award applications. Mrs Ashby is spending some time this week proof reading the fifty applications she has received, asking students to make any changes necessary in order to have everything ready for reference writers next week. A further nine students are in the process of completing their application forms. Mrs Ashby has asked me to thank – in advance the staff who will be writing the references to support the applications that have been received and also Ms Julie Nichols who has been great at supplying her with attendance and punctuality information for these references.

Harpur Trust University Bursary Scheme and Alderman Newton Education Foundation (Bedford Branch)

A final reminder that we have been promoting both of the above charities as vehicles to support students with a home address in Bedford Borough address as potential sources of funding. Both charities have additional conditions attached including an upper limit of household income. I understand a small number of applications have been made or, are expected imminently.

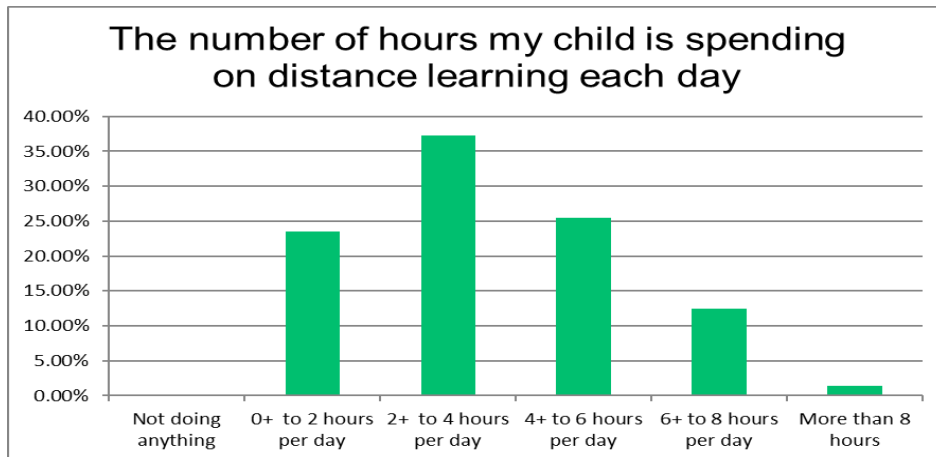
The deadline for the Harpur Trust University Bursary Scheme is coming up. Mr Detheridge is the point of contact. If your child is eligible and is selected by the Harpur Trust they will receive **£1,200 per year** during their three-year undergraduate course.

The Alderman Newton Education Foundation is a one-off award available for young people who live in Bedford Borough who need help to buy equipment and books for their course or apprenticeship.

Feedback from parents and carers Distance Learning Survey - Mr Detheridge and Mr Frazer

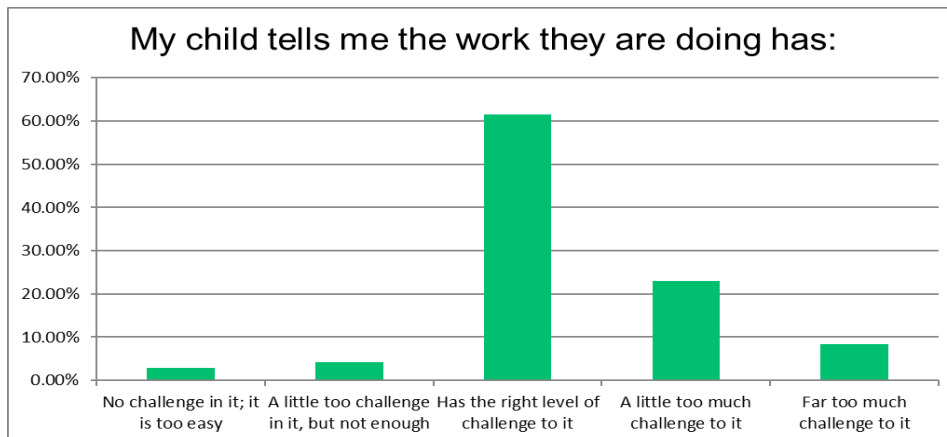
Thank you for completing last week's survey reviewing your child's experiences of the first three weeks of distance learning. The survey is a very useful mechanism to see how the work set by teachers has been received by students. The results of the survey will be shared with teachers to enable adjustments to the work being planned for future learning. We would like to share some of the responses from the survey with you in this newsletter so you can compare your experiences with others in our learning community.

Graph 1. The number of hours spent on study each day



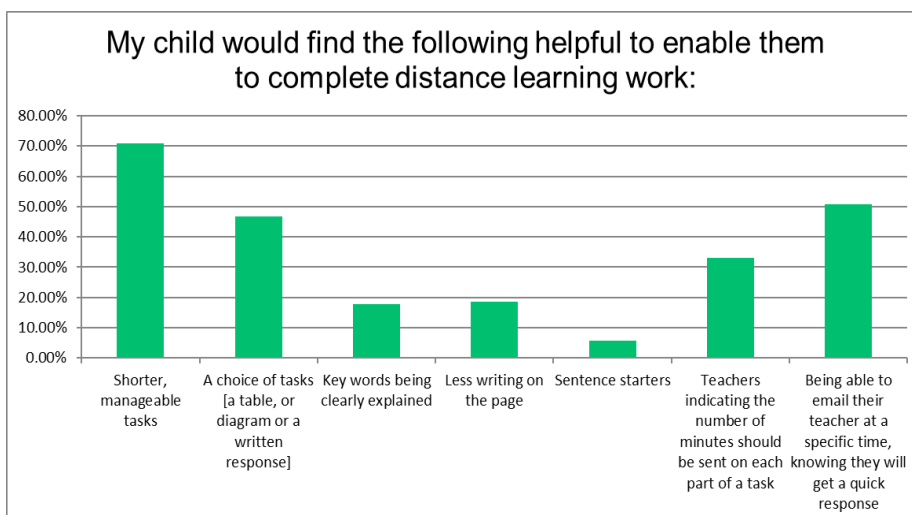
The information above, complemented by the level of engagement shown by *Show My Homework*, shows that learning is continuing in our community. The data shows us that on top of the distance learning work being set by teachers, there is high engagement with learning in a much broader context. New ways of learning (and teaching!) have developed new skills.

Graph 2. The level of challenge in the work being set



It is encouraging to see that, for the majority of learners, the work being set has the right level of challenge. We are aware that it has taken time for some to adjustment to new ways of learning and that this has added to the challenge. We are also aware that the nature of work set for 14 - 18-year olds means that support from parents and carers across a wide range of subjects is difficult. We will work with colleagues to ensure this is considered when tasks are being set.

Graph 3. How can learning be scaffolded to enable better completion of work?



The results of the survey are being shared with teachers so they can refine the delivery of future distance learning. We are aware that materials planned for traditional face-to-face teaching may be more difficult for learners who have not had the initial teacher input. Teachers are looking at recontextualising learning and the above information will be very helpful in planning this.

It is clear from your feedback that distance learning can be supported by breaking down large tasks into smaller bite size tasks, where the suggested time allocated to each task is clearly identified. We are also seeking to implement a timetable, where learners will have email access to a subject specialist teacher in real time, to help them if they reach a barrier to their learning. We will also seek ways to increase the use ICT to support learners, although we are very aware of safeguarding issues area.

We understand that these are very different times we are living through and take heart from the many positive comments made in the survey. We are also very grateful to Mr Brookes for data crunching your responses. We appreciate how difficult it is for some in our community and that no two families will have the same experiences. It is vital you communicate with us so we can continue to support learners and understand challenges individuals face in our community. Thank you for your continued support so far.

Mr Frazer and Mr Detheridge - on behalf of WAT Teaching and Learning team.

Show My Homework Analysis first week of the Easter Holiday – Mr Frazer and Dr Mackay

The following figures are encouraging given it is the Easter break and we said the work was not compulsory. The data refers to the percentage of students logging in during the week Monday 6th April through to Friday 10th April.

Wootton Upper School	Y9	Y10	Y11	Total School
Logged in within the 24-hour period up to 4pm today	42%	40%	24%	36%
Pupils logged in Monday 6 April up to 4pm today	87%	86%	76%	83%
Not logged in since Thursday 19 March	1%	2%	4%	2%

Kimberley College	Y12	Y13	Total College
Logged in within the 24-hour period up to 4pm today	44%	29%	36%
Pupils logged in Monday 6 April up to 4pm today	90%	88%	89%
Not logged in since Thursday 19 March	1%	0%	0.4%

Children in School

We had an average of four or five students, children of key workers, in school each day last week; they were delightful and have enjoyed all sorts of different activities including an Easter Egg hunt, cooking popcorn and other things with staff who are in school with them. A small garden has been weeded too. Thank you to all the staff who have volunteered to be in school over the holiday to support this scheme. Within our family of schools in the local area, Wootton Lower, Holywell and Marston Vale have been open throughout the holiday. I know all the other schools were willing to open their doors, but this was not necessary. The largest number of children has consistently been at Wootton Lower School, where the Head tells me that the school has a lot of NHS key workers.

Free School Meals

You may have read that the new national scheme of e-vouchers has had some teething problems delaying the dispatch of the vouchers. This is enormously frustrating as these families really need them. Mrs McMenemy has been in close contact with families to give them updates. As of this morning almost all eCodes (95%) have been sent and can be redeemed by families. The last few are now being chased so that we can try to get to 100% by the end of the day. Please email dataoffice@wootton.beds.sch.uk if you are still having problems tomorrow.

I would like to thank Mrs McMenemy for all her work on this scheme and also for organizing the food parcels for those families who requested these instead of vouchers. I would also like to thank Mrs Sampson for all of her help with the voucher scheme last week as well as all the individuals who helped with the delivery of food parcels including Mrs Darlow, Mrs Genders, Mr and Mrs Worrall, Mr McMenemy and Mr Malciw as well as Mr Hance who helped on site.

Morrisons, PLC

Cllr Wheeler, Vice Chair of Wootton Upper School's Local Governing Board emailed me last Wednesday to let me know that if the school approached Morrisons, it might have some Easter Eggs it could donate to the school. Following a late evening exchange of emails with Morrisons, early on Thursday morning we received forty Easter Eggs which were added to the food parcels being delivered that morning.

Quite rightly the overwhelming amount of food and chocolate Morrisons was donating was being given to local foodbanks. Wootton Upper School was the beneficiary of the final forty eggs.

Thank you Morrisons for your kindness and generosity, and thank you to the parents/carers who emailed to say how much the Easter Eggs meant to them and their children.

Celebrating Students Work

Mr Fink, Second-in-Charge in Design Technology and Key Stage 5 lead for Graphics has created a Virtual Gallery to house students' work so that you can see the work that is being produced during distance learning. At the moment not all departments have uploaded work to the gallery. However, you may wish to look at what is there at your leisure. It is a wonderful way of showing parents/carers what their children are doing and the work their children are learning. Please use this link: <https://bit.ly/2KjwumF>

All of us are hugely in the debt of Mr Fink. Thank you.

New staff

In a recent newsletter I wrote about the members of staff leaving the Trust. Next Monday we welcome, **Mr Jack McInerney** to our team. Mr McInerney has been appointed to replace Mr Bailey, who resigned from his role as Joint Year 9 Leader at the end of December, a role he shared with Mrs Strickland. **Mr McInerney and Mrs Strickland will work together as Joint Year 9 Leaders.** We wish him a very warm welcome to our Trust. Mr McInerney is very much looking forward to getting to know the year group.

As always: keep safe and let us pray for better times ahead.

Yours sincerely

Michael Gleeson
Executive Principal
Wootton Academy Trust

Wootton Academy Trust operates:
Wootton Upper School & Arts College
Kimberley 16-19 STEM College
Registered in England and Wales
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