



NEWPORT NEWS

A weekly update from NGHS

Volume 4 - Issue 15 - Friday 8 January 2021



The first week of term has seemed like a whole half term and there have been so many plates spinning forwards (and backwards!) Clarity on some matters has come through and we have spent time setting up our Testing zone for the return of pupils (more on testing next week), but still there are many unanswered questions for teachers around the country concerning mass testing, exam grading and when we can try to get our students back into school. I know life must be frustrating and worrying for many families at present, but together we will work through each challenge and I am delighted that our Teams online teaching provision has sprung back into action. See page 2 for more on this.



As well as being Head, I have also been opening up the school this week as one of our caretakers has been away. The Björk classic 'It's all so quiet, ssh, ssh' has resonated in my head most mornings (especially with the crunchy frost) and there is something magical when it is minus 5 degrees at 6.30am! The photograph here was from our main school gate on Thursday

morning. Sorry if that song is now in your heads, too!

I am pleased to report that our building project has got underway - see the campaign section on the right. I appreciate the last thing you are considering in the lockdown is how to help NGHS reach its goal of £75,347, but we need to ramp up our fundraising efforts now the building work has started. We have formed a fundraising campaign group of parents and volunteers and we hope to run some information evenings (online) about the new build for parents, but you can of course [find out more about the building and the campaign here](#). If you are considering donating now, please use the bank details and transfer directly to the school account.

This week we have been communicating most with Year 11 and Year 13 after the government announcements about exams and we have reminded them that their primary goal at present is to keep working as if exams were going ahead. It is only January and there is a long time to go until the summer. Our thoughts are with them at this particularly tumultuous time. It was great to see Year 11 parents at Parents Evening last night, too.

PRIMED FOR SUCCESS

BUILDING UPON A CENTURY OF NGHS EXCELLENCE

The building work has started. Priority one has been to put a new temporary fire exit in the back of the school and to put a road across the field to allow lorries to access the building site. More information and photos on progress can be found on our PFS website. [Do take a look](#) and see if you can help us fundraise! Thank you.

The new lockdown presents challenges in terms of IT equipment for some families. We have loaned out some school laptops, **but I would like to appeal to anyone who may work for a company with laptops which are no longer required**. Are they of good/reasonable quality? Could they be donated to help families who are struggling? If so, I would be thrilled to hear from you.

I can't guarantee exciting news to report each week of lockdown, but I hope that this little taste of normality from us may help you and your daughter(s). More on wellbeing during lockdown can be found in this week's edition. We hope that you are keeping safe and well.

Stay safe and take care,

Mr M J Scott

Newport Girls' High School

Wellington Road
Newport, TF10 7HL
Tel: 01952 797550

Headteacher: Mr M J Scott BA(Hons) Exon PGCertEd NPQH FRSA

To contact the School about a general enquiry, please use schooloffice@nghs.org.uk

Online Learning update



Miss A M Davies
Acting Assistant Head
Online Learning Coordinator

I am writing to thank you very much for the support you are giving your daughters with their online learning. It has been amazing to see how quickly the hard-working staff here at NGHS have got these remote lessons off the ground and in many cases, to hear about the positive and valuable contributions many students have been making to these lessons. I appreciate that family dynamics are different and all home working environments come with their own challenges. So, thank you for all the efforts you are making to support your daughters in their online learning.

There just a few things I wanted to raise on behalf of staff:

- Teachers would appreciate *more* positive participation from students in some classes. It's difficult to gauge the level of understanding and enjoyment when cameras are turned off, students do not contribute to the Chat and keep their mics muted throughout the **whole** lesson. Some students are beginning to use the Chat option to communicate with the teacher which is good, but it would be appreciated if students would try to engage with their learning and their teachers in a more proactive and frequent way. This is particularly important as it seems that the likes of MS Teams and Zoom will be part of our world from now on, including future interviews and training events, for example. It is important that students begin to break the ice in this comparatively safe and unthreatening environment by switching on the mics at appropriate times and sharing their thoughts with others. It gets easier the more you do it, as we as teachers have also found!
- Regarding the point above, it may be in some cases that students do not have access to cameras or

microphones at home. Having spoken to ICT support in school, I therefore include below some links should you wish to purchase these items – I stress, we do not necessarily endorse these products, but thought you may find it useful to see the kind of equipment we are using in school. They can also be bought online if you are not venturing out to buy essential goods.

- I would also just like to remind you that I sent a letter out earlier this week relating to the government scheme which offers the opportunity to potentially boost your daughter's data allowance by [completing the link](#) on the school website:
- I would also ask that you remind your daughters to check their *school email accounts* on a daily basis please – this is the most direct route teachers have to update students and communicate important messages to them quickly and clearly. It is important that students are using their SCHOOL email accounts and not personal ones please.

If your daughter is unwell and therefore unable to attend, please inform the school in the usual way and if there are technical reasons why your daughter hasn't attended a lesson/s, please seek advice from ICTsupport@nghs.org.uk and encourage your daughter to email her teachers to find out what she has missed.

Thank you for your support in all these important matters – it is hugely appreciated. Although strange and challenging times for sure, as before, if we work together we will get through this and hopefully find ourselves back in front of classes, without a screen and finding the new 'normality'.

Should you have any queries or concerns, please feel free to email the school office (Schooloffice@nghs.org.uk) and we will endeavour to get back to you as quickly as we can.

In the meantime, stay safe and well.

Miss A M Davies

NGHS Suggests.....Some hyperlinks for IT technology. Click to view

- ✓ [Basic headset with microphone for a PC from a known brand - £6.99 free delivery](#)
- ✓ [Better quality headset - £25](#)
- ✓ [USB camera - on deal at moment - £13.59 but usual price is £16.](#)
- ✓ [Web cameras we use at school](#)

Other hardware is of course available (including at supermarkets), but these items are reportedly in stock and available online.



Remote Learning Conduct at Home

We always welcome feedback about learning at home. It's nice to hear how well lessons have been going, but also to receive suggestions. We have had a couple of minor behaviour infringements in Year 7 this week hence the Teams Charter, which is shown below. We appreciate it's a different way of working, but we must maintain our high standards of behaviour. Please discuss this with your daughter, particularly if she is in Key Stage 3.



A couple of parents have asked if students can take exercise during the day. The government have been clear that 4-5 hours of online learning are expected daily. However, we are following a timetable with a 20 minute morning break and over an hour's break at lunchtime. We hope students will rise from their desks/chairs, get a drink and some fresh air during these breaks.

We look forward to continuing our Teams lessons and will trial different approaches (some staff are holding 'break out rooms' this week to see how interaction improves in line with Miss Davies' email on page 2.

The NGHS Teams Charter – student expectations:

1. The lesson will begin at the start time. If you arrive early, wait silently with your mic turned off.
2. Do **not** use the Chat option before the lesson begins.
3. The Chat option is there for communication with your teacher only, NOT as a chatroom to communicate with your friends. Queries should be made in formal, polite language.
4. Contact ICT if you are having technical difficulties [ICTsupport@nghs.org.uk]. Your teacher **cannot** resolve your ICT issues during the lesson.
5. Do not attempt to mute the teacher mic at **any point** in the lesson.
6. Use the 'raise your hand' facility to speak to your teacher or open the mic at a **convenient time** if you have a question.
7. Do **not** record any part of the lesson on any device.
8. Do **not** screen grab any aspect of the lesson unless given specific permission by your teacher.
9. Do not attempt to control the screen during the lesson unless given permission by your teacher
10. DO make a positive contribution to your lessons – you may be rewarded with house-points!

Wellbeing

This week we focus on.... **THRIVING AT HOME**



Mrs D Martin
Wellbeing Officer

At a time when maintaining good mental health has never been so important, we want to highlight how physical activity plays a huge part in enhancing our mental health/wellbeing.

At times, when we struggle with our mental health, it can be difficult to find motivation to be physically active, particularly in winter, but if we can muster the energy, exercise has a powerfully beneficial effect on our mental health.

It has been scientifically proven, that physical exercise has a positive impact on our mood. Not only does exercise help us to produce endorphins, there are also other psychological components to exercise that makes us feel good. When we exercise it also improves our self-esteem, and gives us a sense of accomplishment.

Being active can be helpful in treating depression, anxiety and relieving stress. Sleep can be improved as can concentration and memory. These mental health challenges are among some of the most common faced by young people today, and by encouraging you to get active, we can make a difference.

It is recommended by the NHS that children and young people should do two types of physical activity, aerobic exercise and exercise to help strengthen their bones and muscles. They should aim for 60 mins of activity a day. Adults are advised to remain active every day and should also aim to do 150 mins of moderate exercise or 75 mins of vigorous exercise a week ensuring they include strengthening activities.

During lockdown, there are resources available online to help young people stay active. Joe Wicks re-joins us all on Monday for a daily PE lesson, Cosmic Kids yoga and a favourite among all of our students- just dance, to name only a few.

It can be a challenge to maintain motivation but these three tips may help you.

- 👉 Set a goal. The goals that we set should be achievable, allowing you to be successful.
- 👉 Incorporate exercise in your daily routine. If you set a designated time each day for exercise, it will be harder for you to forget.
- 👉 Always make your exercise fun and engaging. Listen to your favorite music, do your favourite activity, have family join in. Just as we take care of our physical health, it is imperative that we take care of our mental health too. Start small, and be proud of every step that you take.

If your daughter is struggling at home, please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of our Pastoral/Wellbeing Team. Either call the Office on 01952 797550 or email schooloffice@nghs.org.uk and one of our pastoral/wellbeing team will be in touch.

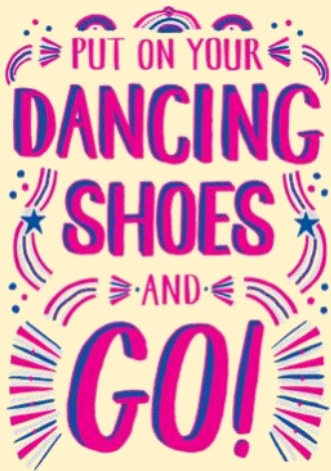




Our new feature includes how NGHS students are making the most of their time at home to do good deeds for others. Tell us about any good deeds you're doing at schooloffice@nghs.org.uk (include a photo!)

Congratulations to Brogan (Year 7) who started to raise money for the Severn Hospice during a period of self-isolation last term. Brogan learnt how to make bobble hats to hang on Christmas trees to remember loved ones. She has raised over £500 for the Hospice as a result. Brogan and her family are rightly very proud of her efforts and the Hospice have invited her to visit when she can get out and about again.

Great work, Brogan!



DANCE CHALLENGE LAUNCHED

Unfortunately, following the recent announcement and current closure of schools, we will no longer be able to finish the PE dance module that was started before Christmas. I understand that dance leaders have put a lot of effort into preparing and teaching the choreography to their peers. We also know how much our students enjoy dance and we would like to continue this in some way. Therefore, we have come up with a dance challenge which can be completed by students at home-this is optional and not compulsory.

How to enter:

Each dance group should email a video to Mrs Goodall (h.goodall@nghs.org.uk) via We Transfer: <https://wetransfer.com/> by **Thursday 11th February 2021.**

Students can work virtually in groups of any size, year group and House. There is no particular theme, however all music and choreography must be appropriate!

You will need to be creative with your editing of the video as each individual will be at home and filmed separately. The PE and U19 Regional netball Teams version of Blinding Lights can be used as an example. [Click here to see this video from Lockdown 1.0!](#)

Every student that enters will receive 5 House Points. There will also be some additional prizes awarded.

Mrs Goodall, Head of Year 10 & House Coordinator



SEACOLE WON HOUSE MUSIC!

As you may recall from the last newsletter of 2020, SEACOLE were victorious in House Music last term. Neha (Y13) Seacole's Performing Arts Captain muses on the success of House Music in Covid-19 times.

It's safe to say that 2020 has been surreal and has brought challenges along the way. However, since October, the school community has become stronger than ever. Whether you're a soloist, participating in ensemble or singing your heart out in choir, House music was such a great way to be creative, whilst also having the competitive spirit buzz throughout the school corridors.

Creating an original composition was an exciting addition to House Music, as it provided me with the opportunity to be experimental and it certainly pushed me out of my comfort zone.

Throughout my time at NGHS, I have been drawn towards composing for an eclectic range of genres and

styles (from bossa nova to waltz), but I have always avoided song-writing, and now I was finally able to face my challenge. Whilst simultaneously arranging and running Choir and Ensemble (shout out to Leonie for conducting), and after multiple attempts at lyrics and potential chord progressions, I composed my song "Hope you know". The beauty about composing, is that it can be interpreted differently by each person. For me, this song is about letting others know that you are always there for them, irrespective of the circumstances.

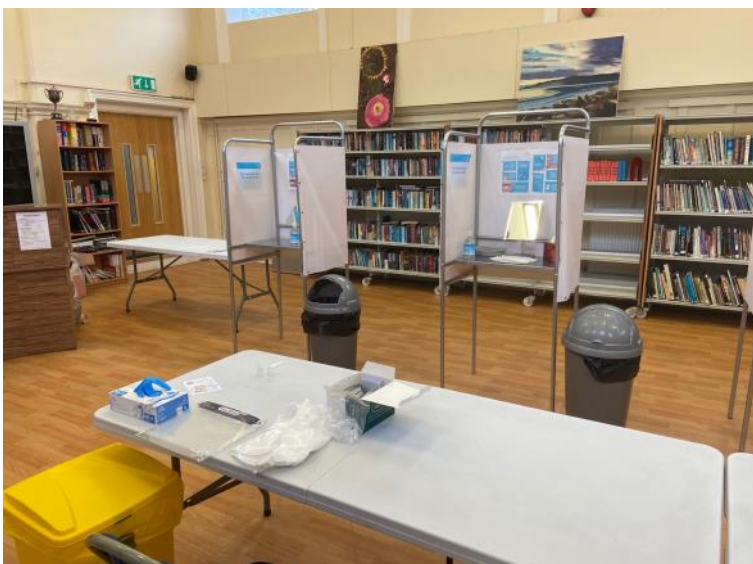
A similar support system is here at NGHS, between friends, peers and staff. A mention must go to the well-being team here at NGHS for all the guidance they have provided over lockdown and throughout Michaelmas term, it truly means so much to all students.

Additionally, on behalf of all Houses, I would like to thank Mrs. Goodall, Mrs. Chapman and Mr. Scott for making House Music a possibility for us.

Coming soon to a 'House' near you (like what we did there?)
HOUSE QUIZ (in Lockdown!)

COVID-19 TESTING

More information will follow in the coming weeks, but NGHS is set-up and ready...





NGHS PASTORAL TEAM - WHO'S WHO?

At NGHS, the safety of students, staff and visitors is our top priority.

Students can speak to ANY member of staff about their concerns, but there are certain colleagues with additional training to support you in pastoral and safeguarding matters.

SAFEGUARDING TEAM



Miss H Clarke
Assistant Head & Designated
Safeguarding Lead



Mr M J Scott
Headteacher
& Deputy DSL



Mrs F Davenport
Pastoral & Safeguarding
Administrator & DDSL



Mrs K Danby
Y7-10 Wellbeing
Officer & DDSL

PASTORAL LEADERS



Mrs K Griffin
Head of Sixth Form



Mrs D Martin
Y11-13
Wellbeing Officer



Miss S Tomkinson
Head of Year 11



Mrs H Goodall
Head of Year 10



Mrs A Seys
Head of Year 9



Ms J Capaldi
Head of Years 7&8

Questions to ask your child in lockdown YOUNGMINDS

What could help you to complete your school work at home? Where would you like to work at home?

Is there anything you want to talk about?

When was the last time you were very happy?

What makes you feel calm?

How can you keep in touch with friends and family at the moment? e.g. Facetime, Whatsapp

What things would you like to do in the future?

What difficulties are you facing now?

What can I do to help?

Where is a place you feel safe?

Would it be helpful if we planned each day together?

Do you have any worries about the coronavirus?

Where in our home do you feel like you can have your own space?

What have you enjoyed about today?

What are you worried about when you lie in bed and can't sleep?

Can you think of anything fun that we can do at home?

How do you feel about things changing?

How do you feel about staying at home?

Click on the image to get more assistance and information

To urgently contact a member of the senior leadership team outside school hours, please use urgent@nghs.org.uk
Please include your phone number and name of your daughter