



Dear year 7,

How are you all? As I said in my previous letter the grass has been cut! Pictures below, I know it's a bit lame but I'm proud of it 😊.



Other than that, it has pretty much been the same cycle of setting work, using the garden gym and pretending to organise my wedding. I also have found a great documentary to watch, called "The Last Dance" which is all about Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls basketball team. Even if you don't like sport it has some great insights into mental resilience and achievement.

This will be my last newsletter to year 7 😞. Miss Daw will be taking over my role after half term. I will be staying as head of pastoral for year 7 and focusing on the transition period for the new year 6's coming up in September. Miss Daw will be your head of pastoral as you move into and become year 8's in September.

Over to you Miss Daw.

Please keep the challenge entries coming in, please email them to [sdaw@honitoncollege.devon.sch.uk](mailto:sdaw@honitoncollege.devon.sch.uk)



### Tutor Challenge Number 3:

What have you done over the last few weeks that is completely selfless?

## The Selfless Challenge!

**Definition of selfless:** concerned more with the needs and wishes of others than with one's own; unselfish.

As before, send me a photo, email description or video of you doing something completely selfless.

**Deadline:** Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020

- It can be a little as taking out the bin without being asked
- Cooking dinner
- Walking a neighbour's dog
- Doing a food shop for your grandparents
- Sitting with a younger sibling and helping with them with their schoolwork
- You and your household clapping for carers

### Mental Health Awareness Week

Another reason for my selfless themed tutor challenge. Some of you will be aware that this week is mental health awareness week, which is hosted by the Mental Health Foundation and this year, the theme is **kindness**.

Throughout the Coronavirus pandemic, the news has rightly kept us abreast of the all the latest updates and developments, but as the days turned into weeks, there have been many incredible stories of resilience, team spirit and camaraderie, making the theme of "kindness" so appropriate.

Chief executive of the Mental Health Foundation explains more below: Last week, I waited in a socially distanced queue outside the supermarket as the rain started to fall. One of the staff noticed we were getting wet. He scurried away to find a pile of umbrellas, carefully disinfected the handles and passed them out with a smile. To my surprise, my eyes started to well up. At a time when I felt alone, I suddenly felt connected.

*If I asked you the last time you gave or experienced kindness, you would tell me stories of when you felt moved, protected, held, seen, loved.*



Next month we will kick off **Mental Health Awareness Week (18-24 May)**, focusing on the power and potential of kindness. We think it could be the most important week we've hosted, not least because our own research shows that protecting our mental health is going to be central to us coping with and recovering from the coronavirus pandemic - with the psychological and social impacts likely to outlast the physical symptoms of the virus.

### Kindness and Mental Health

*Kindness is defined by doing something towards yourself and others, motivated by genuine desire to make a positive difference.*

We know from the research that kindness and our mental health are deeply connected. The research shows that kindness is an antidote to isolation and creates a sense of belonging. It helps reduce stress, brings a fresh perspective and deepens friendships. Kindness to ourselves can prevent shame from corroding our sense of identity and help boost our self-esteem. Kindness can even improve feelings of confidence and optimism.

### What's your Daily Routine?

This is probably going to change over the next few weeks. I am sure your teachers have already started in invite you to virtual TEAMS lessons/ check in. This will be during your timetabled lesson with that teacher and will happen at least once a fortnight.

#### Why are we doing this?

- We (teachers) miss you and want to see/ speak/ chat to you!
- So, you don't forget what your teacher looks and sounds like!
- To prepare you slowly for when we return to school
- To answer any questions, you might have about the work we have set
- To hear your other classmates.

#### Top tips/ how to prepare for this to happen:

- Look out for the email invite and accept it
- Try to be in a quiet space in your house with internet (do not worry if you don't have internet access teachers will catch you up when you are back to school). This means I must control Smokey and Dexter when I am doing my lessons because they are bound to be naughty!
- Have the TEAMS app ready on your computer/ tablet/ phone
- Teachers might ask you to mute yourself because it might be too noisy if we can hear you all at once (such a same we don't have a mute button when we are in "real life" lessons... I can't get some of you to be quiet some days!!!)
- You don't have to show your face if you don't want to. If you do show your face please make sure your background is school appropriate.
- Start following your normal school timetable so you can plan when you have virtual check ins. If that is possible.
- If you can't attend the virtual check in let the teacher know through email/ TEAMS conversation so they know you tried.



### **Check your time settings!**

As you get invited to more of these meetings make sure that your laptop has the Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) set up. It is unlikely that Miss Bean wants to have a TEAMS meeting with you at 2:00am! Mr Wright has completed a helpful guide on how to do this, I have attached this to the email.

### **Thank a Teacher Day - 20th May**

School leaders, teachers and support staff have been asked to go to great lengths to help this country step up to tackle coronavirus, thank you.

In light of the swell of positive feeling generated by the video message staff created for our students, I would be fantastic to receive, in return, your messages for staff and also your friends.

Because there are so many more of you than there are staff, please stick to a still image (with a message) and try to be as positive and upbeat as possible. We will do the rest; add music and edit them together.

Please send your contribution to [nriggs@honitoncollege.devon.sch.uk](mailto:nriggs@honitoncollege.devon.sch.uk) ASAP

### **Devon Schools Virtual Sports Day**

**All competitions are virtual, and you can enter as many of them as you like. The competitions are suitable to do at home, in your backyard or garden or at school. They give you the chance to virtually team up with your classmates, represent your school and compete against other children from across Devon!**

**How to do this is attached to the email.**

Take Care and Stay Safe.

Contact me if I can help at all. My email address is [leach@honitoncollege.devon.sch.uk](mailto:leach@honitoncollege.devon.sch.uk)

From Mr Leach

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*Talking to a friend or family member</li><li>*Talking to a helpline</li><li>*Talking to a trusted professional – a GP, teacher or another adult.</li></ul>	
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