

Parent Bulletin

Secondary



Dear parents/carers,

This week is the final week of half term and I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you for all of your hard work over the last five weeks. Supporting your child to learn at home is not easy and I know many of you may be juggling the demands of supporting your children and working from home. Please know that I am extremely appreciative of the time, effort and encouragement you have given your child with their home learning over this half term.

Completion rates at Goresbrook are excellent. In every year group nearly all students are working hard at home. This is brilliant as it will help ensure students don't fall behind.

You may be aware that we are continuing to run our co-curricular programme on a Wednesday. From next half term, students will be able to participate in this, collecting evidence and earning a series of badges that they will receive on their return to school. Mr Davis has worked very hard to put this together and will be launching it to students on the week beginning 1st June. He will send all relevant details to parents/carers. Please do support your child to get involved in this. We also remain committed to developing students character and this programme will give them an opportunity to engage in some meaningful activities away from their computer screens.

Finally, a polite reminder that there will be no work set for students on the 1st and 2nd June as these are staff training days. Lessons will recommence on 3rd June and we look forward to hearing from students then.

Wishing you a very restful half term break.

Kind regards,

Megan Harris,

Principal- Secondary



If you would like to thank a teacher or member of staff, do feel free to use this link

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=0flzgtak1Ee_PGCwkfBquJuPMacXTiFAoVd6Hx5NY0VUOVISQVIFVkvZVVzhBTUI4V0czV1dBUzZYQy4u

Once again, thank you for your support and please feel free to get in touch if we can help.

Miss Aziza Ajak
Vice Principal

Dear Parent or Carer,

I wrote to you in September about our home learning system and the important role that it plays in supporting student academic progress and achievement. As we seek to make improvements for next academic year, I am looking for your feedback on the existing approach.

Prior to the school closure in March, students were completing homework using their knowledge organisers. Students were then completing quizzes in both coaching time and lessons before taking a high-stakes multiple choice quiz on Thursdays or Fridays. As you will be aware, students who did not achieve the 70% pass mark attended a compulsory home learning club on Mondays. In addition to this, Year 10 students worked on weekly application homework in all of their subjects. This may have been written work, such as a past exam question or using an online programme.

To help shape our homework approach next year, I would be grateful if you could take 5 minutes to complete a brief survey about home learning by Wednesday 20th May. Please [click here](#) to give your feedback.

Thank you in advance for your time and of course, your continued support for homework.

Kind regards,

Mrs C. Davis
Assistant Principal

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Messages from
Heads of Year



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Year 7

Year 7 have had an excellent week this week, we saw the highest number of 100% heroes in year 7 since we started remote learning and a huge number of students get recognised with a 'purple mark' for the excellent quality of their work. The coaching competition has also become very close between Kangto and Drakensberg with Drakensberg taking the lead, Mr Young has proudly provided this statement regarding their current lead of his coaching group:

'As we know, Drakensberg are incredibly hardworking, and this is evident by their current ranking in the coaching competition! I am proud to be your coach and I am really impressed with your collective diligence and determination to be completing your home learning to a high level during these difficult times. I am really looking forward to seeing you all again in Lab 2 and for us to have that Pizza party!!! Keep it up Drakensberg!'

Miss Rose - Head of Year 7

Year 9

The key message this week is 'Forward Thinking.' As we move towards year 10 and GCSEs all the skills that you are using now, will be especially handy when studying in the future.

There was a slight drop last week in terms of work completion, although this has improved slightly this week, I must stress the importance of students staying focused and committed to their education whilst working remotely. It is vital that every piece of work is submitted each day in accordance to the remote learning plan to ensure that students keep up-to-date with their learning and do not fall behind.

I am extremely proud of those students who have managed to complete all work set. It is the final week of the half term this week and I'd love for Year 9 to take the lead once again with the highest completion rate in the school.

Mr H Sesay—Head of Year 9

Year 8

I have continued to be impressed by the number of Purple marks being given to students who have been completing great work especially in MFL and English this week. **My vision is that we have the greatest number of students receiving purple marks in all subjects in the final week of the half term next week!** It has also been a pleasure to see the number of appreciations that teachers have been giving to students in year 8 and what makes me most proud is to see that it is always different students receiving these each day. This has made the coaching competition very close with Emilius slightly edging in the lead as I write this.

I would love to see more Year 8's getting involved in the accelerated Reading quizzes and the class reader which is also taking place. Every day, through your Year Group Teams page, you will have a new section of the book to read, read to you by your teachers. You can listen to this 20minute chunk of reading at any point in the day, but we suggest doing it in your normal Coaching time of 1.25-1.50pm.

I would also like to thank all parents/ carers for your support with Year 8 this half term I feel very proud of their progress and am confident that this will continue right up until the end of the academic year and as they move towards Year 9. All students will know how important I believe it is to leave a positive, lasting *legacy* and many students are on their way to leaving Year 8 having done just this. Keep it up Year 8!

Mr A Osei-Miller—Head of Year 8

Student help

If students are still struggling with operating Microsoft Teams, Word or OneNote, please ask them to our IT team so we can solve this as soon as possible.

Student.support@goresbrookschoo.org.uk

Year 10

All in all, consistency seems to be the word of the week for Year 10. Once again, we have seen a climb in completion rates across the cohort but also an increased desire to complete **quality** work. The year group, as a whole, is giving 100%. Next week is the last week of the half term and it is more important than ever that our students maintain this consistent excellence. As a challenge, I have set Year 10 the goal of 90% of the year group, completing 90% (or more) of the work. If this challenge is completed, I will give them the opportunity to vote for which teacher they would like to see covered by a bucket of icy water - the game is on...

Thank you so much for your continued support in ensuring our students are maintaining their academic excellence, I look forward to seeing everyone in assembly on Monday.

Mr A Davis - Head of Year 10



Secondary

Career of the week: Agricultural Engineer

Agricultural engineers integrate technology with farming. For example, they design new and improved farming equipment that may work more efficiently, or perform new tasks.

Average Salary (per year) £18,500 Starter to £40,000 Experienced

How to become an agricultural engineer

You can get into this job through:

- a university course
- an apprenticeship
- working towards this role

University

You can do a foundation degree or degree in agricultural engineering or agricultural machinery engineering. These courses are offered by land-based engineering institutions.

You can also get into this career with a higher national diploma or degree in environmental, electrical or mechanical engineering.

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- at least 1 A level for a foundation degree
- 2 to 3 A levels to do a degree or higher national diploma



What it takes

Skills and knowledge

You'll need:

- maths knowledge
- knowledge of engineering science and technology
- design skills and knowledge
- knowledge of physics
- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- excellent verbal communication skills
- analytical thinking skills
- knowledge of computer operating systems, hardware and software

to be able to carry out basic tasks on a computer or hand-held device

Apprenticeship

You may be able to start by doing a land-based service engineering technician advanced apprenticeship. Once working, you would complete further training to become an engineer.

Entry requirements: You'll usually need: 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), including English and maths, for an advanced apprenticeship

Work

You could work as an agricultural engineering technician and train on the job to qualify as an engineer.

What you'll do

Day-to-day tasks

Your day-to-day duties might include:

- assessing the environmental impact of agricultural production methods
- supervising construction projects, like land drainage, reclamation and irrigation
- solving engineering problems, like designing all-terrain vehicles to move over uneven ground in different weather conditions
- testing and installing new equipment, like harvesters, crop sprayers and logging machinery
- using GPS, weather data and computer modelling to advise farmers and businesses on land use
- planning service and repair programmes for machinery

Working environment

You could work in an office, on a farm or in a laboratory.

Your working environment may be outdoors in all weathers.

Career path and progression

With experience you could move into project management or specialist technical research and development.

You could also work towards incorporated or chartered engineer status by applying to the Engineering Council. As a chartered engineer you'll plan, research and develop new ideas. The Institution of Agricultural Engineers has more information.

You could also move into technical sales, business development, teaching or consultancy work.

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Only human: How change can affect our mental well-being. As human beings, we thrive on routine. Structure is good for our mental well-being because we build up a kind of survival programme that helps us maintain balance. Our brain becomes conditioned to have expectations of what will give us pleasurable feelings and we automatically do those things to cope with life. Change really disrupts that and our brains have to learn new ways of dealing with life on life's terms. Some of the things that made us smile and laugh before might not give us that same enjoyment. Activities we used to do that helped us cope might not be accessible any more. Some of us can find it hard to adjust and fall into an "all or nothing" thinking such as going from a 4 or 5 day a week gym-goer to doing no exercise at all and eating unhealthily. With so much uncertainty at the moment it is very natural to let go of some of those things that maintained our well-being, however we may have noticed that we have become emotionally unsettled as a result of that.

If we think about traffic lights, most of us have an idea of what will keep us in the green phase of life, generally quite well, coping and managing. It is only natural that at times we will fall into amber. Change, lack of sleep, disrupted patterns, worry, added responsibilities etc. can make us feel unsettled. Most of us will learn how to adapt and make changes to cope better to put us back into green, however that can take time and sometimes we can get stuck in amber for a while until we can create a new way of being that works. If left too long, we could enter into the red phase, making it harder to cope with challenges or manage our emotions. That's why it is important to be aware of feelings and emotions. They are indicators for when we need to start looking after ourselves more. The below mini reflection space might help you to think about what usually works for you and think about how you might need to adjust it with these new circumstances. You can also use this to discuss mental wellbeing with your child/ren.



What activities did I do before Lock Down that helped me to feel mentally better? *E.g weekly Zumba class*

What need were those activities meeting in me that made a difference to how I felt? *E.g my Zumba class was fun, sociable and helped me feel less stressed by burning off excess adrenaline.*

How can I meet that need in lockdown? / How can I adjust or change those activities to make a difference to how I feel mentally now? *E.g I can join an online Zumba class, use a YouTube video with a friend online or dance around with the kids.*

Remember everyone in the household has mental health just as we have physical and it is natural for us to have some days when we feel more well than others. Self-care helps us to tune in to ourselves and improve our overall wellness in the same way that we might eat fruit and vegetables and exercise to stay physically well. Our mental health is just as important to take care of. For more ideas here are some really useful links around mental wellness during lock-down.

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/coronavirus-wellbeing-activity-ideas-for-families/>
<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>

Lynne Northcott from Place2Be.

The School Library

Ms Dimi's Book Recommendation:

Our life is turning "Curiouser and curiouser" and most of us are seeking a way to enjoy the time we spend at home and escape into a different world full of unexpected things. 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' is, I believe, one of the best and most memorable stories out there. Freely accessible in a comic strip edition here: https://readon.myon.co.uk/reader/index.html?a=gr_alice_f09 or in its original version here: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/28885> (includes a Kindle option)



Remind your children to be transported to the magical world of books from the comfort of their homes for at least 20 minutes per day and challenge themselves by doing Accelerated Reader quizzes every time they finish a book. For more interesting events and activities follow our library's Twitter account at: <https://twitter.com/GoresbrookScho1>

Miss Dimitra Charalampidou, School Librarian