

19 April 2024

Dear Parents/carers

Well, in all honesty, we could have done with a slightly smoother to start to Term 5, couldn't we?

Since we were aware of the cyber attack in the last few days of the Easter break, staff on site have been working tirelessly with the external agencies to both contain and rectify the situation. I know that this has meant some decisions were thought to be at odds with the best interests of students, but we were acting directly on the advice of the experts in order to restore 'normal service' as soon as possible and to protect our systems moving forward.

I will continue to update you on progress as and when this is appropriate but following the first week back I would like to draw your attention to the following:

- **Cashless Catering** – This is a service we have asked to be a priority to be restored. For the time being students will continue with the system of verbally telling staff the choices they have made at both break and lunchtime. Although the reduced offer will continue next week we are aiming to return to offering the main meal. Parents are being asked to continue to top up cards from home as the costs incurred are being deleted retrospectively from accounts on a daily basis. For information, it has been noticed that some students are spending considerably more than they normally would – one student spent almost £10 on lunch on one day last week. I would urge that parents continue to monitor spending so that all purchases can be covered.
- **Access to Office 365** – This needed to be disabled this week in order to reissue passwords, given that any one of them may have been compromised in the attack. We have identified those students in years 10 – 13 who are studying courses that require the completion of coursework and these will be the priority group for restoring passwords next week. Given that our filtering systems cannot be in place on site for the time being students in this priority group will be able to access their accounts off site and will not be able to do this in school.
- **Students taking examinations this year** – As part of the work this week, all exam boards have been made aware of our situation. Naturally we do not want any student to be disadvantaged for a situation that was beyond their control.

Year 9 vaccinations

These are due to take place next Wednesday, 24th April.

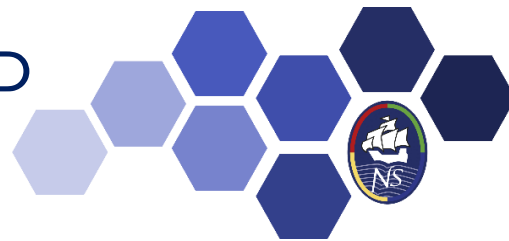
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Year 11 Exam preparation

As mentioned in a previous letter, although the main exams start from early May, practical exams conclude much earlier. Next week GCSE 3D Art and Fine Art will be completed, with GCSE Photography the following week.

Year 11 attended an assembly this week where the plans for the remaining 5 weeks were shared. As I said to my History group, we are very much at the 'business end' with, in options subjects a maximum of 15 lessons remaining. Staff have planned lesson by lesson content since January and so with continued focus and attendance in lessons, students will be fully prepared for the schedule ahead.

Support with Exam Stress

As students are in the final stages of preparing for their upcoming exams this term, I thought it worth reminding you that Kooth is a source of help with any stress or anxiety they may be feeling. Kooth offers 24/7 instant access to anonymous and personalised mental health support. Qualified practitioners are available outside of school hours and during school holiday.

<https://www.kooth.com/>

Please see below links for free webinars as parents/carers you might find helpful to support your child with exam stress.

[Mon 22 Apr. 1-2pm](#)

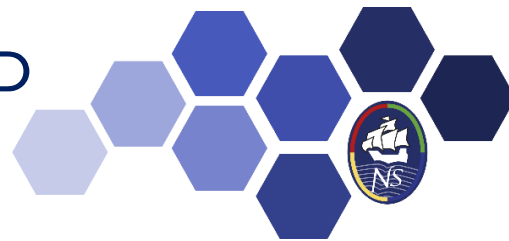
[Thu 25 Apr. 6-7pm](#)

Scotch Horn Leisure Centre

Scotch Horn Leisure Centre in Nailsea have an open day on Sunday the 28th April.

On the open day there will be a number of classes for both members and non-members to try for free. Badminton courts will be open and free to use, along with free use of the gym. Soft play will also be open and free to use for under 5's.

Annual memberships are discounted on the day plus an offer on direct debit memberships where new members can join for £10 and get May for free. Memberships are available for 11-15 year old's and 16-17 year old's.



Finally...as I stated at the start of this letter, it has been a challenging week for staff. However, it has also demonstrated just how much, to quote Billy Ocean, 'when the going gets tough, the tough get going'. Every member of staff on site this week has really pulled together to ensure things remained as normal for students as possible and will continue to do so.

I know I have said this a number of times but the relationships between staff and between students and staff at Nailsea is really something special. I think another member of staff, fairly new to the school, summed it up brilliantly when he pulled me aside this week and said, 'I've always found that #TeamNailsea thing a bit cheesy, but this week has really shown me it is actually true. I have never had that in the other schools I have worked in'.

I am very lucky to be the current custodian. Have a lovely weekend.

Take care and be kind

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D Elliott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mrs D Elliott
Headteacher