



Newent Community School and Sixth Form Centre

Striving for Excellence

Principal • Mr Alan Johnson

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29th January, 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

We are all waking up today with the wonderful news that a fourth Covid-19 vaccine could be approved for use in the UK within weeks. Late-stage trials suggested it was 89 per cent effective in preventing Coronavirus. As we all struggle to find a way through this current crisis it is important to grasp every piece of good news as it arrives.

We are continuing in our efforts to break chains of early transmission by delivering lateral flow testing in school. I am happy to report that as of today (Friday) we have had no positive cases identified in either the staff or students who are attending school. However, I am duty bound to remind you that the option to have these tests each day instead of isolation has been 'paused' by the government. Therefore, if a student or staff member is in close contact of a positive case in our school, it is a legal requirement that they be asked to self-isolate and stay at home. This means they must not leave the house, except to go in the garden, and they are not allowed to meet anyone from another household. No other members of the household are required to isolate unless they, or the young person, develops symptoms. Please remember that if you have a child in more than one year group and the young person isolating doesn't have symptoms, other siblings can still come to school if they are registered for our Keyworker Student Provision.

Free School Meals

Free school meals have been a hot topic of discussion throughout the pandemic, with the government position shifting on a regular basis. Our Finance Team have already contacted every family who is currently eligible for free school meals and are issuing vouchers on a weekly basis. If you have any questions or think that you may be eligible for this support please contact the Finance Team via email at finance @newent.gloucs.sch.uk

However, the latest guidance for February half term is that if your child is eligible for Free School Meals, Gloucestershire County Council will be responsible for providing vouchers for families during this period. To apply for your vouchers over half term please follow the link:

<https://gloucestershire-consult.objective.co.uk/public/a2lcustomerfeedback/freeschoolmeals/schoolmeals>

The portal is **ONLY** live between 25th January – 5th February 2021.

Snowman Competition

Thank you to Mrs O'Regan for organising an amazing Snowman competition at the weekend.

All entries will receive a House point and the winner, Aleksia Atanasova in Year 7, will receive 5 House points. Well done to all of you and thank you for sharing your creations with us.



Unity Doors

Thank you to Lawrence Newton and the team at Unity Doors in Newent for their generous donation of a Chromebook to support remote learning.

It will be put to very good use by one of our students when learning at home.

#inittogether
#homeschooling



CyberFirst Girls

All year 8 girls are currently participating in the National Cyber Security Centre competition called 'CyberFirst Girls', where they compete in teams against students all over the country, doing different computing challenges. It's been great to see so many students taking part and really enjoying the challenges - the competition runs until the 3rd February at 12pm so there's still plenty of time to get some more completed!

SpeakOut!

As you may recall, I am a Trustee at one of the Charities I support, The Cyber Trust <http://thecybertrust.org>. Working collaboratively with The University of Gloucestershire, we have decided to launch an internet safety app known as "SpeakOut!" for Android and iPhone/iPad for use in schools in 2021. This is being designed initially, though not exclusively, to meet the needs of girls from the ages of 10 to 13, a period of transition for many, with a focus on how to recognise and respond to cyber-bullying. Further apps and themes will be developed for specific, vulnerable groups and tailored to meet their needs. The first prototype on Cyber Bullying is now completed, and has been trialled at our school with 27 of our students. The Trust would be very interested in feedback from other students at school, and their families. It can be accessed on Android or Apple smartphones by anyone searching for the term "SpeakOut!" (all one word) on the relevant App Stores, or directly from here:

- Google Play: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.ac.glos.SpeakOut>

- Apple App Store: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/speakout-by-the-cyber-trust/id1545126126>

When accessing the app at each store, you will see its title and description. The logo looks like this (to make sure you have the right one).



We are thinking that the next two iterations will be on Grooming, and on Sexting. After that a wider Cyber Security canvas may be addressed. Do let us know what you think via me, or directly to info@thecybertrust.org

Virtual Art Exhibition

Please find a link below to our second Virtual Art Exhibition. Please take a look at the amazing talent we have at school. It is truly wonderful.

<https://www.artsteps.com/view/6013f028beca922ba20ec1ce>

Revision Text Books

All the revision textbooks are now ready for collection. If you have paid for books on Parentpay then please email lillyrogers@newent.gloucs.sch.uk to make an appointment to collect the books from school next week.

Have a restful weekend.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Alan Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Alan Johnson
Principal