

7th May 2020

NSFC4ME

The weekly update on college life



THE LATEST UPDATE FROM NSFC PRINCIPAL GERARD GARVEY

*When the official guidance
changes, we will be ready*

PREPARATIONS ARE BEING MADE

The early May Bank Holiday normally brings with it a moment for teachers and students to reflect and take stock before the busy external exam season begins in earnest. This year things are obviously different; exams are cancelled, and the college building remains closed. However, it is still worth pausing and reflecting on how far the college community has come over the last several weeks. Students, supported by their families, have worked hard to adapt to remote learning. Teachers have developed new skills in setting and providing feedback online. Many of the vital day to day interactions between students, coaches, and support staff are now almost entirely conducted through email and SMS. Staff, students and parents can all be proud of the resilience they have shown and I am pleased that levels of engagement from students remain high.

As a college, we know there is more that we can do to improve this new way of learning. Teachers this week have been trialling interactive video seminars as a way to help students learn more effectively. We will be launching new Office 365 email addresses to students at half term which will allow them easier access to key programmes and also make online video seminars more accessible through Microsoft Teams.

Nevertheless, we all miss coming to college. The joy of face to face learning in a vibrant, diverse community like NSFC is difficult to fully recreate online. It will not surprise you that we are developing detailed plans to allow us to quickly respond to possible changes in government guidance. I will communicate any changes directly to you when we know more.

Yours faithfully,

Gerard

DIGITAL SAFETY IS A PRIORITY FOR ALL OF US



DIGITAL SECURITY

We think digital security is of paramount importance to all our students, and Denise Chapim, our current NSFC Student President offers us her advice on how to remain safe and secure.

- Always use a strong and reliable password that you know you will remember and do not disclose it to anyone. (Except from parents)
- Keep social media accounts on private – this allows you to approve who follows you and views your content, keeping you safe.
- If your account is public try to refrain from tagging your location in posts, and any other personal information that could put you at risk Such as your age, school/college.
- When browsing the web, applying safety restrictions can add an additional layer of protection from hackers – stopping you enter dangerous or suspicious sites.
- Make sure your ‘friends’ are people you really know and have met. A friend of a friend can go on and on until you don’t even know who you share the same friend with. Also they may not actually know the person either, so better to be safe than sorry.
- If you have doubts about posting a photo/video online... You probably shouldn’t. A good rule of thumb would be if you wouldn’t feel comfortable with everyone seeing it then it should remain only for you. Not the internet. We hear this everywhere but its true, once its posted it will never truly be gone, even if it’s deleted.
- Please remember, whilst social media helps us to connect it can also help us polarise each other. If you witness any bullying online or harassment from any kind, stay calm and remember that you have some control over who engages with you online. Any abuse report it to the app before blocking them. And always consult a parent or trusted adult with your concerns regarding this.
- We love to stay connected online – Now more than ever during these unprecedented times.
- ‘Skype’, ‘FaceTime’, ‘WhatsApp’ and ‘Zoom’ are examples of ways that video calling is accessible. When video calling in large groups, a popular app is ‘Houseparty’. Whilst it offers friends to see who’s active, join and leave a call easily, remember to only add people you specifically know. Usernames and profiles can be changed and once you are ‘friends’ they can join any call you’re on when the room isn’t locked. The same way it is advised against talking to strangers physically, virtually can be just as dangerous. – The last thing you want is a stranger to join your call when your catching up with your friends.
- Keep your device up to date. This can be updating your software on your phone, changing your security questions and answers on you accounts.
- Have a critical eye – Fake news is everywhere, it isn’t helpful, leading people to be misinformed and often more worried. When reading or watching news always refer top reliable sources such as the BBC and NHS websites. A tip from myself for finding news that isn’t a typical source is to check its validity. Who wrote it? Is there any evidence to the supposed data? Having a critical eye is a very valuable skill not just in many of the A level courses but in the wider world – a transferable skill to lots of responsibilities.



NEW CHALLENGES FOR EVERYONE

DREAM BIGGER

There is currently an opportunity for students from our sixth form to get involved with a developmental project that NatWest are offering. It's around inspiring the next generation of female entrepreneurs! It's focused on supporting young females, such as yourselves, to consider alternative career paths as well as developing vital skills for the future world of work.

We think this would be a great opportunity for you all to get involved with, not to mention it will look good on your CV as well as future UCAS applications as it shows initiative and a willingness to further your education and expand upon transferable skills!

We suggest you sign up to the following sessions:

- Tuesday May 12th: [Introduction to Entrepreneurship](#)
- Wednesday May 20th: [Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset](#)
- Thursday May 28th: [Defining Entrepreneurial Purpose](#)

Full details available from Bethan Lewis.

bethan.lewis@newcastlesfc.ac.uk



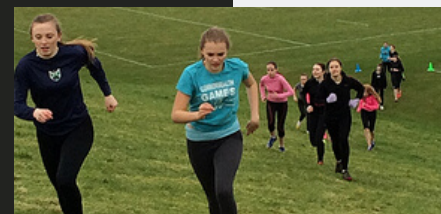
CAN YOU OUTFRAN YOUR TEACHER? – A CAMPUS ONLINE CHALLENGE

We have all been trying much harder during the lockdown to stay safe and keep ourselves healthy. For a number of staff at NSFC this has been best achieved with a regular run. With ParkRuns now postponed, we recently set up a 5km challenge to see just who is the fastest runner at NSFC.

Then we realised that this was a challenge we could share with all our students. On Monday 11th May on our new campus online site www.nsfccampus.com we will launch the fun running challenge for all our new applicants, and we want everyone at NSFC to take part. In future weeks we will share our league table of the fastest recorded times.

For entry details to join our virtual running league contact Mark Carton at

mark.carton@newcastlesfc.ac.uk



AN EVEN BIGGER CREATIVE CHALLENGE FOR ARTISTS/WRITERS/POETS & DESIGNERS

Our early summer Creative Challenge finished last week, and we have shortlisted the four winning entries, which were all fantastic. Winners are being contacted next week, and we will publish the winning entries in next week's edition of NSFC4ME

As we enter our final term we would normally be showcasing talent from across the college at internal events, so we wanted to set our biggest ever Creative Challenge, so that we can still enjoy the activity and share some of the amazing talent which exists at NSFC.

Launching on Thursday 14th May – THE CREATIVE COLLECTION will be our largest ever competition exclusively for students and applicants to Newcastle Sixth Form College and will be a real college community event, with the hopes of running a live online showcase at the end of the summer term, to share all the work produced.

Details will be available from Enya-Marie Clay from 14th May

enya-marie.clay@newcastlesfc.ac.uk



ONE MINUTE INTERVIEWS

We ask NSFC staff three quick questions to give you a little insight into what makes them tick.....

If you were stuck on a desert island, what one book/piece of literature would you take with you and why?

Right now, I would take the book I am reading, *The Institute* by Stephen King which is about a group of kids with supernatural abilities.

Have you got a favourite board game?

At the moment my favourite board game is *Monopoly* cheat addition because it's fun to see if you can break the rules without anyone noticing.

During the lockdown what has been your one top tip for remaining positive?

I believe in taking it one day at a time or more precisely one hour at a time. By breaking my day up into little activities, complete manageable projects and keeping my mind busy it keeps me positive. I also only watch the news once a day!



Gemma Halliday
Religious Studies

If you were stuck on a desert island, what one book/piece of literature would you take with you and why?

I really struggled with this question, because my favourite books are all multiple series, Harry Potter, Game of Thrones, Robin Hobb's *The Realm of the Elderlings* series are just that a series. I considered cheating and saying I'd take a compendium of these, instead I decided on taking a classic story that is both feel good for dark times and progressive for its time, so I'd like to take *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. A gripping and thrilling narration of a life and love in the regency era.

Have you got a favourite board game?

I have a somewhat large board game collection and picking my favourite is quite tricky. At the moment, it's probably *Dixit*. *Dixit* is a charades-like game where each player attempts to guess another player's card based on a single clue. It gives an opportunity for people to express a common interests and relive old memories, as well as making some new one.

During the lockdown what has been your one top tip for remaining positive?

My top tip is to have a strong, disciplined control of your social media and news intake in a day. I decided that I only want to check in with the news once a day. I have very ruthlessly unfollowed a number of my facebook friends who do nothing but write about coronavirus and people who just constantly post news without checking its validity. I will refollow them when this crisis is over.



David Shaw
Chemistry

If you were stuck on a desert island, what one book/piece of literature would you take with you and why?

This is a tough one, I read a lot and have hundreds of books, I just finished reading *The Blade Artist* by Irvin Welsh (it's one of the *Trainspotting* series – I highly recommend anyone to read the whole set) I think if I could only take one piece it would be an anthology of poetry by Leonard Cohen, he explores a lot of themes in his work about the human condition, he was a wonderful wordsmith

Have you got a favourite board game?

I do love to play board games and I have a really lovely growing collection of them! I mainly buy them from charity shops so they are older versions with wooden or metal pieces rather than plastic. My family won't play *Monopoly* with me anymore because I get a bit too competitive, but I love playing *Scrabble*. I have a really fancy wooden set with a spinning board and a velvet tile bag (very posh). I really enjoy anagrams and word play so it's the perfect game for me!

During the lockdown what has been your one top tip for remaining positive?

The thing that has kept me positive is being active. I have been walking a lot around where I live (sometimes up to ten miles a day) through woodlands and country roads, obviously socially distanced from others! A lot of the places I have been are places I used to get dragged to when I was a kid so it's been lovely to re-experience these places as an adult and really appreciate how beautiful they are! I walked a short length of Hadrian's wall and I was the only person there, I don't think I'll ever get that experience again it was fantastic!



Hannah Robson
Art, Craft and Design