



ASHINGTON
Academy

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

July 2020



WELCOME to our summer newsletter

...which comes to you once more electronically.

We are so proud of how well our students and staff have adapted to virtual learning and I would like to extend my thanks to every parent and carer who has supported us in this endeavour.

We have been incredibly impressed by our students' resilience and we are so grateful for the support we have received from the wider community. Despite us learning remotely, students have been busy with virtual school, competitions and celebrating National Thank a Teacher Day on Wednesday 20 May!

In addition, we have been thrilled to welcome back Year 10 and Year 12 students for face-to-face learning and we have been very excited to launch our transition activities for our incoming Year 6 students!

Once again, I'd like to reiterate my thanks to parents and carers as we have worked through this unprecedented time. I'd also like to extend my thanks, along with all staff at Ashington Academy, to those in our community who are working on the front line to care for us all.

Gronne Weston
Headteacher

Teachers produce PPE for frontline workers

Alongside the other five secondary schools within the North East Learning Trust, members of staff here at Ashington Academy produced PPE for frontline workers in the fight against COVID-19.

Using an approved design from Kitronic, Mr McLaughlin, Miss Whelan and Mr Hall used the school's laser cutter to produce protective visors for frontline workers, producing a whopping 3,246 across all six schools in the Trust.

We were delighted to be able to play our part in the fight against the virus and we would like to thank the incredible frontline workers for their tireless efforts and dedication to keeping us safe.



Ask the teachers!

Some of our teachers shared their reflections on lockdown and what they have learnt during virtual school:

"We are so proud of how well our students have adapted to their new way of learning in our virtual school and it has been wonderful to see so many students achieving virtual reward certificates to celebrate their amazing achievements! I've thoroughly enjoyed seeing all of the incredible efforts that students have made in our activity bonanzas and challenges – what a talented bunch of students we have!" - **Miss Richley**

"I could not be more proud of our students; they have adapted well to our new way of learning and have continued to develop in their remote learning skills. I have missed seeing my students and colleagues daily and I really look forward to seeing them all soon. I believe I have the best job in the world! I absolutely love what I do and couldn't think of anything more rewarding. I just can't wait to see all of my students' smiley faces!" - **Mrs Morgan**

"I have learnt that I must talk an awful lot when I'm teaching lessons! I've also learnt (on a more serious note), how to use Web Recorder and then edit my video so that I delete any ridiculous mistakes I've

made, like mis-pronouncing certain words and having to re-do a slide! Most importantly, I have not necessarily 'learnt' as such, but I have realised just how much I love being the classroom with my students. I miss the conversations I have with my students. I miss seeing the happiness in a student's eyes when they realise they have mastered something and I miss self-criticising my handwriting on the board!" - **Mrs Corbett**

"During virtual school through being in lockdown, there has certainly been greater opportunity to learn new skills and spend a bit of time practising them. I have certainly improved my skills working with Microsoft Teams and participating in live video calls; I no longer sit and speak through meetings with the mute button on!" - **Mr Holliday**

"Technology can be both your best friend and your worst enemy during lockdown – I think we've all learnt so many technical skills! As well as my usual students, I've also really enjoyed 'meeting' lots of geography students who I didn't teach in person before lockdown!" - **Mrs Douglas**

IMPORTANT DATES for your diary

Due to the uncertainty caused by the coronavirus pandemic, we cannot commit to any fixed school events at the moment. Parents' evenings and other planned events in school are postponed until further notice.

Please keep checking our website and social media channels for the latest updates.

HELLO TO OUR NEW YEAR 7 STUDENTS!

Well, as if this time wasn't stressful enough for you all: then came lockdown! Here at Ashington Academy we are very excited to meet you and we have a warm welcome awaiting you for your first days in 'big school'!

Until then, we have been busy creating as many virtual welcomes to make your transition that bit easier. Check out our website or Facebook page where you will find: a virtual tour of your new school, welcome messages from your new form tutors, advice to new Year 7 students from our current Year 7 students and lots of vital information on all you will need for your start at the Academy.

Don't be nervous: everyone is lovely and you will be right at home from day one!

See you all soon!



ART IN NATURE!

Lockdown has given many of our students the opportunity to get in touch with nature and explore their creative sides as they take a break from the technology they are so used to.

We were incredibly impressed by the wonderful natural 'mandalas' that our Year 9 students created using natural products that they found while exploring outdoors.

Reflections on lockdown

Back in March, all that time ago, coronavirus was just another news story from the other side of globe - that was before it started to become apparent that things might get out of hand.

To start with, a lot of us were excited at the idea of school closing for a while and getting to relax at home, but as the situation began to intensify, we quickly realised that this was going to be serious.

After our school closed the first few weeks were really strange to deal with. But despite the obvious negatives

caused by quarantine, I believe there are also some positives to take from the experience, such as having the opportunity to try new things.

I think it's also important that we recognise the response nature has had to the lack of human activity recently, with animals returning to areas they have long since abandoned and pollution levels dropping dramatically. Hopefully, despite the trauma and distress the pandemic has caused within society, we can at least learn some lessons and move forward in a positive direction.

By James Tilley, Year 10



Lockdown poetry

On the 26th of March, the government took stock,
As lockdown was announced,
On the news at 6 o'clock.
"Stay at home and isolate," was their simple request,
And stay away from family and friends,
These times are not the best.

We listened to the guidelines,
And feared for the months ahead.
We felt disappointed,
By people who went out instead.

Hairdressers have all been closed,
No professionals to trim our hair.
"We'll all soon be out of this," they say,
"But for now stay safe and take care".

How long will this lockdown last?
We still have no idea;
So we all must do our bit,
Until we're virus clear.

Although these times have been really tough,
We must stay positive and excited.
As in the not too distant future,
We'll all be reunited.

By Amy Holliday, Year 7

We're social!

Follow our social media accounts to stay up to date with all of the latest news from around the Academy!



@ashingtonacad



@ashingtonacademy

Students unleash their creativity in lockdown

Our Year 9 photography students have been busy during lockdown and we are very proud to say that several pieces of their work have been submitted to the National Portrait Gallery as part of the Hold Still project spearheaded by the Duchess of Cambridge. We're thrilled to share some of their entries with you...



Kyran McIntyre, Year 9

"When I took this photo I was proud as we had used things around the house to make a massive tent. I was also thinking about the rule of 3rds in this image, which makes the focus the tent."

Ella Patterson, Year 9

"This image captures the reality of lockdown for many people. It highlights the changes that we as a country have had to make in order to help others."



Caitlin Adams, Year 9

"The image represents how someone could feel negatively impacted by the current situation. It was also taken to show how it has affected and changed our daily lives. We wanted the photograph to show the loneliness that someone could be going through."



Lexi Aubrey, Year 9

"This image was intended to show the daily struggle of feeling confined during lockdown."

