



The
Nicholas Hamond
Academy

LOCKDOWN

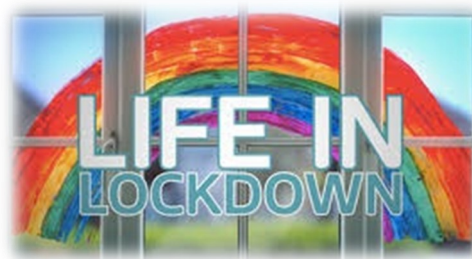
2020

**LIFE AT THE
ACADEMY**

Determined to be...
'the best that we can be'

**#TNHA
VWAY**

We are delighted to add our section to the Icen Partnership COVID Diary reflecting on a time that will certainly go down in history, when the government took the unprecedented step of closing all schools in March 2020 due to the uncertainty and concern over the virus this country and many others around the world faced. Not only did schools close but so did many businesses with staff asked to work from home where possible, mandatory mask wearing, pressure on the NHS, shortages in shops leading to rationing of toilet paper (of all things) and other items which became in short supply. We were asked to leave our homes only for necessary trips to the shops for food, exercise and visits



to loved ones were not allowed due to the rapid transmission of the disease and loss of life. The most vulnerable among us were asked to shield completely and not leave the house at all except in an emergency meaning that crippling loneliness and poor mental health was an inevitable result.

We were all riveted to the daily briefings from 'Number 10' with the government and various experts giving us the appalling death rates and measures put in place to try to stem the virus.

The message 'STAY AT HOME – PROTECT THE NHS' was heard clearly by us all.

WORKING FROM HOME

It was a huge challenge for both staff and students to adapt to working from home and there were of course teething issues as we grappled with the logistics of asking every student to work on-line. The academy lent laptops to many students along with those supplied by the Department of Education and kind donations from local businesses. It was however, with determination and great fortitude that on-line learning became a success, although never a match for in-person and face-to-face learning in the classroom, teachers delivered 'live lessons' where possible in order to involve students. Our students rose to the challenge in true TNHA fashion and were absolutely amazing in their approach and engagement ensuring that the situation we faced had as little impact as possible on their future.

It should not be forgotten however, that many schools including TNHA, kept its doors open to children of key workers and the most vulnerable throughout the whole period of lockdown. Without doing so many people responsible for our NHS, food supply chain, emergency services etc. would not have been able to continue their necessary roles in order to help the country survive.

Comments from students, staff, parents and carers are included below helping us to recall this period of the country's (and indeed the world's) history. Firstly, we were very proud to receive wonderful comments from our parents/carers and would like to thank them for their steadfast support. We share a few of these:-

"I would be grateful if you could pass on my thanks and appreciation to ALL staff members, 'Y' has had an incredible and interesting (due to Covid) time at TNHA. We have seen him grow into the young confident young man he now is. Many thanks to everyone who has had some part in 'Y's' High School path".

"Thank you so very much to all the staff at TNHA who have helped and supported X' & us as a family throughout all the lockdowns. We will always be so grateful for how you all went above and beyond from work set on Teams, phone calls home and Live lessons. The assemblies and Form tutor sessions have been a good addition too. X's teachers have helped keep him focused and supported".

"Y has been such a star throughout all of the lockdowns, the first being a huge independence learning curve for her. She seems to be coping well, though of course it was much easier for everyone when we had the better weather and could get outside more I hope you are all keeping well and thank you all for everything you do for our children. Keeping us all informed and your care is very much appreciated - always!"

"I just wanted to convey how very grateful we are at the quality and effort staff are putting into the online learning, especially the live sessions. They are helping provide much needed clarity and guidance of the independent work and are a great opportunity to ask questions."

"Absolutely fantastic logistical effort, again a huge thank you to staff working so hard and tirelessly to deliver this quality education to our children in such a challenging time for all, you're all amazing."

"I just wanted to pass on my thanks to all staff involved in the year 7 learning zooms today...I was very impressed. For children who may have been worried, anxious etc. today, each and every member of your staff did their best to allay any concerns they may have had. Thank you for all you are doing for our children, I for one, really appreciate it. Please could you pass on my thanks?"

"I would like to add note of appreciation to all of you for your continued efforts and support to all the children in your care. I recognise it's a difficult and often frustrating job at the best of times, but can't help thinking that you are all potentially missing out on what is perhaps the nicest part of the school year.... the end! Your continued efforts over the years are appreciated"

"I wanted to email you to say how impressed I was with X's maths live lesson. I felt it was definitely helpful and no different to being in the class room. With the situation we are all in again I would like to thank you".

"I want to thank all of the wonderful staff working their socks off this year. What a year, and one that I'm sure you are ready to see the back of. Despite the giant hurdles, I still feel my son is getting a wonderful education and can I can see you're still striving to make it an outstanding school".

Despite the restrictions, students and staff worked hard in support of our local community determined to engage with local residents where possible.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

At the height of the pandemic we supported various projects such as:

Hope & Happiness Project Red Cross Posters -



Posters with messages were coloured by our younger students and sent to all those people in isolation and delivered via the food



packages made up by the White Hart Pub in the town which quickly

became the 'hub'. Posters were also given to those people who were visited by town counsellors and residents of the local care homes.

'Thank you Wall'

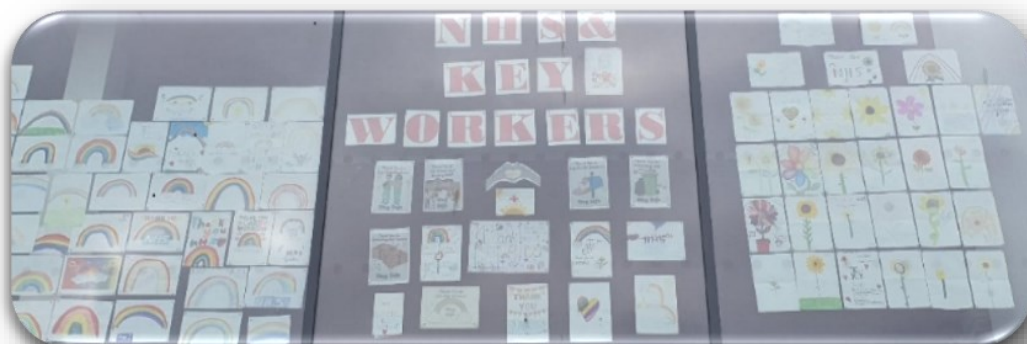
The landlord of the White Hart Pub started a 'thank you wall' noticed by TNHA on the local Swaffham Facebook Page.

The landlord was contacted and was delighted to add posters made by the students honouring and thanking

Those responsible for keeping the country going at the height of the pandemic namely NHS, carers, supermarket workers, police etc.



Students were also keen to display our own 'thank you window' displayed facing the street in support of our key workers.



Christmas Tree Trail:

Businesses and other organisations were approached by Meadow House Nursing Home and asked if they would take part in a Christmas Tree Trail in order to encourage people to get 'out and about' in the fresh air and count how many trees they could find on the trail.



TNHA's tree stood proudly in the library window facing the road bringing a little seasonal cheer to those who passed by.



Student Christmas Cards:

Dear Sir/Madam

I hope you have a merry Christmas!

I know it's not been so fun right now and you haven't been able to see your family and friends but it will and hopefully go back to normal soon!

The academy made contact with the Iceni Partnership who were delivering hampers to those senior citizens who would normally have joined the Lions for their Christmas lunch.

Students made Christmas cards which were delivered to Iceni to include in those hampers.



NATURE AND HIDDEN TALENT



The period of lockdown did seem to bring many of us closer to nature and those of us lucky enough to be able to leave our homes to exercise, spent time taking local walks and enjoying what nature had to offer.

Students found various skills they didn't know they had such as carpentry, baking, soap making and even the ability to shear an alpaca! The academy encouraged students and staff to share any photographs they may have taken so that they could be enjoyed by all.



ISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Circumstances were very different from other years for those students facing GCSE exams in summer 2020 as they would normally have expected to sit public examinations. However, this was not possible due to lockdown and instead, subject teachers were asked to provide a 'centre assessed grade' to the exam boards in June as well as a ranking of all students in each subject which took into account the previous performance of students.

The results were very encouraging and allowed students to move forward to their next phase in their education journey.



OUR STUDENTS REMEMBER LOCKDOWN

"Lockdown was difficult for us all and it affected everyone in different ways. When we first went into lockdown I was scared and confused, all the new rules everyone had to follow seemed strange. Not going to school and doing online learning was also a shock. Not being able to see family and friends made me feel alone at times. It was a very uncertain time but slowly I got used to new rules and restrictions". Poppy

"Before lockdown I was doing 3 sports every day but when we were in lockdown I couldn't do any and I felt very unmotivated. Christmas was affected because we couldn't have the whole family together and it was just me and my mum and dad and it didn't feel like Christmas". Evie

"The global pandemic changed my life massively as I couldn't do my every day activities such as going out with my family, going shopping, having a holiday, going out with my friends and lots more. It was extremely tricky to have to stay inside. It was however a perfect time to spend time with family and make memories with them. We spent a lot of time in the garden and watching films. My mum had to stay at home as she wasn't allowed to work in her salon but luckily my dad was classed as a key worker so he still went to work and was able to earn us money". Charlie

"My daily lifestyle changed in many ways. I still had to go to school because my mum was a key worker. I couldn't go out with my friends which meant I had to communicate on calls and through my x-box. I think the vaccine is a positive initiative because it cut down the daily rate of deaths and helped many people live". Tyler

"We had to do online learning instead of being in school which changed my routine a lot because we did not leave the house except that I occasionally went for walks with my mum if she wasn't working from home. I also ate different things because certain foods were short or not there at all in the shops". Xanthe

"Despite not living in Swaffham I would usually be there five days a week for school. Coronavirus changed my life immensely. At school we had to wear masks which was horrible having to cover your mouth and nose in the warm weather. Also we had to stay in the same room at school and couldn't walk about so much. Luckily my dog really helped me cope as it meant I had to get up in the morning and walk him. I hated not being able to see my friends and family." Alex

"The pandemic meant that I had to get used to being inside much more as we were not allowed out very much. I wasn't able to see my friends and family and had to do online lessons. We could not go and see my Great Grandma because her care home was under lockdown for a lot of the time". Alice

"Instead of being more active and going out to do things we did lots online from the comfort of home. Due to the multiple lockdowns and being forced to stay at home as much as possible the use of technology increased through things like Teams and Zoom. I think that because of the lack of face-to-face communication people have become more anti-social struggling to hold conversations in real life. The vaccine caused a debate of whether it was positive or negative but in my opinion it reduced the severity of symptoms and helped the NHS with their workload". Anabeth

"I used to do football practice on a Tuesday and Friday after school and then had a game on a Sunday. I wasn't able to go any more during lockdown. I tried to play football in the house but got told off!" Alfie

AND FINALLY...

Finally, with the easing of lockdown we have eventually got used to a 'new normal' with the introduction of vaccinations, mass testing and a greater understanding of what we need to do to protect ourselves. These months however will be etched in our memory forever when we remember just how much we were all absolutely 'determined to be the best we could be' despite the challenges of the pandemic!

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'the best that we can be'