

January 7th 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

We are certainly living in the middle of a rapidly changing situation, where plans have to change almost immediately after they have been made. Thank you for your patience and understanding at this time and for the support you are giving both your children and us. Hopefully, school can still give families some degree of certainty and consistency during these difficult times. To that end, please see below for an update of current issues:

Remote Learning

In light of the announcement of an extended lockdown by the Prime Minister, we have had to review our approach to online learning to ensure it provides a high quality and sustainable experience for all students. As you will appreciate this situation is very fluid, but we hope, in light of the most recent government guidance, this will provide a sustainable long term plan to deliver a high quality learning experience for all students. We will continue to review this provision and amend in the light of any further government guidance.

With this in mind, following the guidance from the Department for Education, **Year 11 and 13 will continue to receive their lessons through Microsoft Teams following their normal school timetable.** These lessons remain available on Teams for 20 days after the lesson to access if required. All materials will be saved in Satchel as well for future reference. A student guide to Teams is attached. Please note that the 'chat bar' function is enabled to allow for interaction and academic discussion and high level questioning but the teacher will be monitoring the content of this closely. As in the classroom, there is an expectation that students are fully engaged and involved and we know that they will want to participate enthusiastically in each lesson.

From Monday 11th January **Years 7 through 10 and 12** will have pre-recorded lessons uploaded to our Satchel home learning platform. This is to ensure that all students will have access to high quality learning whilst still following their normal timetable. The lessons will consist of high quality materials and resources as in the physical classroom and will be delivered by the class teacher- using methods such as a PowerPoint with embedded video and visual resources. They will include elements from students' teachers explaining and modelling key concepts, along with high quality supporting materials and activities. There will be assessment opportunities within each lesson and students will be expected to complete any follow up work and where requested submit this to their teacher. These pre-recorded lessons have been designed to allow teachers to prepare and deliver the highest quality materials whilst also allowing them the chance to liaise with students and offer bespoke feedback during the course of each fortnight. We appreciate however, that students enjoy live lessons and we will be reviewing this in the next week as we would like to be able

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

to expand our live lesson offer to all year groups in some format. More information will follow on this in due course.

All remote learning tasks will be uploaded onto Satchel using the red “classwork” function and students should log in and follow these lessons using their regular login. Students in these years should continue to follow their normal school timetable and access these lessons during the normal school lesson times wherever possible. Students’ engagement with the Satchel lessons will be monitored regularly, with Leaders of Learning informed to support any students who have not accessed the materials.

Assessment tasks, including short Satchel quizzes, will be set for all year groups to help monitor their understanding of the content delivered and provide feedback on their learning. Additional home learning tasks will also be set for students, but these will focus mainly on revision and extension.

Students should be reminded to check their school email account regularly and adhere to the Teams Student Guidance when using this platform. All lessons, whether delivered through Teams or Satchel, will be 50 minutes in length. This will enable students to have a short break between each session. As you will appreciate in the current climate, if a teacher is ill there may be a slight delay in uploading work. Learning from Wednesday 6th to Friday 8th January will continue as planned. Please note Monday 11th January will be a **week 1** for all students following their normal school timetables.

Timings of the day for lessons:

Lesson 1 Start 9:30

Lesson 2 Start 10:30

Break 11:20-11:30

Lesson 3 Start 11:30

Lunch 12:20-12:55

Lesson 4 Start 12:55

Lesson 5 start 13:50

Wednesdays and WOW activities

Students finish formal lessons at the end of period 4 on Wednesdays, however, there is an additional opportunity for them to take part in a wide range of WoW enrichment activities online and choose to complete optional home learning tasks. These can all be found on Satchel.

Assemblies and Form Time

Students in year groups 7-11 will also have an **assembly on a Friday morning on Teams 9:05-9:25 am with their tutor before lessons start at 9:30 am** to convey any key messages, starting from next week.

Students in Years 7 through 10 will also have a weekly **tutorial session** on Teams each **Monday morning at 9:05 am**, starting from Monday 18th January. This will be with their form tutor and will help to support them through online learning and address any issues as well as continue to deliver guidance and information on a range of topics.

Free School Meal Entitlement

If your child is entitled to Free School Meals, you will shortly be receiving contact from a company called WONDE regarding food vouchers. This will be as an email and may go into your 'junk' box so please check carefully. This will consist of a digital voucher which can be redeemed at any supermarket in order to buy food (alcohol and tobacco is exempt). This will replace the hamper food collection from reception which was initially meant as a short term measure.

The initial voucher will have a value of £40 and should be with you on Monday 11th January. This will cover this week and the next two weeks. It is our expectation that by 25th January the government will announce a voucher scheme similar to the one offered during the last lockdown. We will of course keep you up to date with any changes in this area.

In-school provision

This is now up and running. The needs of critical worker parents and new vulnerabilities may mean demand for in-school provision grows over the coming weeks. We have been in communication with parents and carers to identify who requires a school place. If it proves necessary, we may ask for simple evidence (in line with DfE guidance) that the parent in question is a critical worker, such as their work ID badge or pay slip.

The critical worker list has been updated to include new workforces whose work is critical following the end of the EU transition period. Children with at least one parent or carer who are eligible for a school place. It is not necessary for both parents to be critical workers. The list of critical workers can be seen in the DfE link below.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision?utm_source=4%20January%202021%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19

I do not underestimate the challenges that many of you will now be facing and I can assure you we will continue to work with you to provide as much support as we can. Please do not hesitate to contact the relevant teacher or your child's Leader of Learning (LoL) if you have any questions that need answering.

With my very best wishes

Mr AB Green

Principal