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TRUST·ED
Schools' Partnership

Headteacher: Mr J Parr BA Hons

8th February 2021

Distance Learning Update:

Dear parents and carers

We recently sent out a survey asking for feedback on distance learning. Thank you for completing this, the overwhelmingly positive feedback about distance learning was reassuring. Rest assured we will be working hard on the areas where we can improve.

One particular area that came out strongly in feedback was the demand on students (and staff) in changing from one lesson to the next, getting books, equipment needed for a specific lesson to hand and opening relevant Teams lessons and links to other learning resources. For this reason, from Monday 22nd February, the final 5 minutes of each lesson will be assigned to students having some time to ensure that the work that they have just completed is submitted correctly before they leave the lesson. In addition, the first 5 minutes of the following lesson will be devoted to students getting set up ready for the lesson with all necessary resources, the lesson content opened and the OneNote exercise book ready for new work. It is likely that the students will therefore be in the lobby for the first 5 minutes of each lesson. We hope that this slight tweak will ensure that students have a more manageable workload and help to organise themselves mentally in transitioning from one lesson to the next.

Our distance learning makes use of Office365 and Microsoft Teams. Last year we sent out an acceptable use policy for parents and students to complete. As the way in which we use Teams has developed since then, we have sent out an updated agreement that we need you to complete. If you have not already completed it, please follow [this link](#), and complete the form by Wednesday 10th February. All students have been sent a separate link for them to complete. As we adjust to the everchanging world of distance learning we have updated our distance learning policy, which can be found [here](#) on the school website.

Please note that Friday 12th February will be a 'Drop-Down' day. The aim of the day is to consolidate learning to date, to provide an opportunity to catch up on missed work and to engage in enrichment activities, some of which we hope will allow a break from screen time. Normal timetabled lessons will not take place, but all students will be guided as to what they should be doing that day. Further information on this will follow later in the week.

We are currently investigating ways of conducting progress evenings as the usual meetings in school are not possible. We will be in touch when we have something in place. Similarly, the Year 9 Pathways process will start later this term, but unfortunately holding an event in school will not be possible. We

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will provide all the information necessary for students to make informed choices and will guide them every step of the way. There will be an initial session on Pathways choices on Friday this week as part of the Drop-Down day for Year 9. This will be to start the students thinking about possible choices, not actually making those choices.

Thank you for the support that you have provided during these challenging times, we have certainly come a long way since March last year with online learning. We are working hard to find ways of replacing the face-to-face experience of being in school as best we can from a distance. The students have been fantastically resilient and determined in their approach, as have the staff. There has been much to learn in using the technology in ways we have not done before, so a big thank you to all concerned in helping this to happen.

In these challenging times it is essential that we all take care of our mental health, it is important that students take the opportunity that the half term break provides to get plenty of screen downtime and exercise. There is a great deal of advice and mental health support available from various sources, but these sites offer an excellent service:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/>
<https://www.childline.org.uk/>
<https://www.kooth.com/>

If you are looking for something to do indoors during half term the Scouts have a fantastic selection of [activities](#) for all ages, you could take a [virtual museum tour](#) or discover a new [recipe](#). Whatever you get up to next week we hope you have a restful and relaxing time.

Kind regards,

Dr Wood
Deputy Headteacher

Mr Bird
Assistant Headteacher