



7<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you about some changes we are making to how we are setting work for our students – we hope these will make home-schooling a little easier for you.

The first change is that individual subjects will set work on specific days, starting from next week, in line with the schedule below. We hope that by having a set day it will help families be able to plan and prioritise the work in a more predictable way. We also hope that longer deadlines will give you the flexibility you need when it comes to organising access to digital devices and the internet.

| Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday | Thursday      | Friday            |
|---------|-----------|-----------|---------------|-------------------|
| English | Maths     | Science   | MFL           | RE / PSHE         |
| History | Geography | PE        | Technology    | Art               |
| Music   | Drama     | Dance     | IT / Business | Child Development |

There will still be a core task for each subject each week which should take an hour to read and complete. The work for this task is to be sent back in to their teacher and feedback will be given. It is important that students do their best within the hour but they should not feel that they must keep working longer in order to complete every single question. We know some students are putting a lot of pressure on themselves about this and want to reassure you about it. There will also still be extension activities available for each subject. These are optional and will develop understanding of the topics further. We hope these are proving interesting and engaging. Mr Rule is complementing these by sharing some fascinating 'virtual tours' on his Twitter account – these are well worth checking out.

Year 10 will only be set work for the subjects on their timetable and these will still be set on the days indicated above. Year 10 also have the fantastic GCSEpod videos available to them to help check key topics.

The schedule has been set to tie in with the BBC Bitesize website, which is releasing additional resources for most subjects. You might wish to use this alongside the work being set by our teachers. I have certainly found some of the video clips very useful when trying to explain things to my own children over the past few weeks! <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

If you have a day where access to devices and the internet is too much of a barrier, please don't worry – let the teachers know and encourage some reading instead. This could be anything – books, news websites, and even recipes. There are seven simple tips for families about how to support reading on the poster attached to this email.

The second change is that we are recommending students turn off automatic notifications for Google Classroom. We know these are causing additional stress for some students at the moment, and turning them off should help students get a sense of control back, which should help to improve well-being. This is done within each individual Google app and the instructions are attached to this email. If the constant alerts and notifications from other apps such as social media are an issue it may be that turning these off would also be a positive step for well-being.

**HEADTEACHER:** Mr G Rule

We have also had a couple of useful tips shared with us. One is to turn on 'text to speech' on the devices at home. This allows you to highlight some text on the screen and then the device will read it aloud. Most devices have this built in already and it may be a helpful teaching aid for you. The other is that iPhones have a scanning button built into their Notes app. This means that the images take up less internet bandwidth than a photograph if you are sending work back into school.

I hope these changes do help to make home-schooling a little more manageable for you. I certainly know from my own experience that it can be very challenging. As a school we have learned a great deal about distance learning in a short time and always welcome feedback on what has been set and any challenges – as well as any successes we can celebrate.

Yours faithfully,

Donald Cumming  
Deputy Headteacher