

21st April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope that you all had a good Easter break (if you managed to get one!) and that you are keeping well. It has been a strange time recently and we have all been getting used to teaching without students in classrooms and setting work on Google Classroom instead. This process has been interesting for teachers, students and parents and all concerned have found it effective (and also sometimes challenging!) at this difficult time. However, now that we are some way into setting work online, we want to get the best out of the process; so we sent out a Google Form to parents/carers recently to ask for your feedback on what is going well with Google Classroom and what could be improved. I want to thank you for your responses.

Analysing your comments and ideas has been productive and as you would expect, everyone's experiences and thinking are different. 'Too much work being set!' some say and 'Not enough work being set!' say others. There are of course a range of views but here are the key messages:

- We need to fine tune the frequency, volume and deadlines of tasks being set and make sure we are not all setting work on the same day.
- Teacher feedback through Google Classroom to students, acknowledging their work and giving them praise/tips on how to improve needs to continue and is essential.
- When tasks are set, they should be succinct, clear and take no longer than one hour to complete.
- Students seem to like a greater volume of shorter tasks that they can readily engage with.
- Students love the quizzes, virtual feedback (when teachers film themselves showing a class how to improve work), YouTube links, Seneca and extension tasks.
- Students need to be reassured that we will not set them sanctions for not completing all the work set when we return to normal!
- We need to try to strike a balance between students not feeling overwhelmed with work and keeping the challenge and the learning going!
- The work we set should reflect our curriculum, so Core subjects will set more work than other subjects.
- Even though there are no Summer exams, it is still important to keep Year 11 engaged with their learning as far as possible should they wish to take an exam in the Autumn term. We do not want the last time that they are engaged with a subject to be April if they expect exam success in October!

We have tried to strike a balance of everyone's views and for the start of this new term we will be asking teachers to follow the enclosed schedule to set work for students on Google Classroom in KS3 and KS4. This schedule will be in place for the next four weeks and we will review it then (perhaps looking at provision for Year 11 sooner than that.)

Mr Henman will be sending out a separate 6th Form letter this week outlining KS5 provision.

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From Monday 20th April, a National Online Academy backed by Government funding has provided a sequenced plan of video lessons and curricular resources. The initiative advertises over 180 online lessons per week free to use: <https://www.thenational.academy/online-classroom>. Please have a look at what is on offer and use the resources as further learning or extension tasks.

Please also remember that if your child requires extra work, teachers are always happy to supply it. Again, there is no pressure to complete it but your child may like a little extra work to think about!

Thank you again for supporting us with setting work online and for your feedback; we do hope to resume normal service as soon as possible!

Yours sincerely

Mark Cavill
Vice Principal

2 Week Schedule for KS3 - Years 7-9		
Work to be set and 1 week deadlines on the following days		
Monday	English, Geography, Sport, Art	Expected study time over 2 weeks: English, Maths, Science: 4 hrs each
Tuesday		
Wednesday	Maths, History, DT/ICT, RS	
Thursday		
Friday	Science, MFL, Performing Arts(PArts)	
Monday	English, Geography, Sport, Art	Geography, History, MFL, PArts, DT/ICT: 3 hrs each Art: 2 hrs Sport, RS, PSCS: 1 hr each
Tuesday		
Wednesday	Maths, History, DT/ICT, PSCS	
Thursday		
Friday	Science, MFL, PArts	
2 Week Schedule for KS4 - Years 10-11		
Monday	Maths, History, Attenborough Options, RS	Expected study time over 2 weeks: English, Maths, Science: 6 hrs each
Tuesday		
Wednesday	Science, Turing & Hawking Options	
Thursday		
Friday	English, Geography, Core Sport, Shelley Options	
Monday	Maths, History, Attenborough Options, PSCS	Geography/History and other Option subjects: 4 hrs each Core Sport: 1 hr PSCS: 1 hr
Tuesday		
Wednesday	Science, Turing & Hawking Options	
Thursday		
Friday	English, Geography, Core Sport, Shelley Options	