

EBE/srg

13th May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following my video message, we have evaluated the Parent and Student surveys and had further conversations with many parents. It is clear and understandable that 'lockdown fatigue' is setting in and students are yearning for more interactive resources and contact with their teachers. We have listened to this feedback and are working towards a model which increases our contact with your child.

From Tuesday, 18th May, we are strongly recommending that all PowerPoints sent to students will have an audio commentary by a teacher. If other resources lend itself to audio, we will do this too. Next week, our Science, English and Maths departments will trial live audio lessons with some students in Year 10. If you are part of the trial group, you will be contacted by staff before Friday, 15th May to be offered the chance to take part. We then hope by Term 6, we can increase our live audio lessons online to all students in Years 7-10 in the Core subjects. However, we will make the final decision on whether we are in a position to commit to this after the trial.

As I said in my video yesterday, we can't please everyone. There will be some parents and students who are having to share computer resources and won't be able to take part in the live audio lessons. We aim to record the lessons and attach to google classrooms so these children do not miss out. We cannot guarantee with live audio lessons that it will always be your teacher. Some staff are carers to elderly parents, some are educating their own children of both primary and secondary age, some are in school providing care and support for vulnerable children and key workers and lastly, some of our staff are unfortunately unwell. We therefore are trying to find a model which provides for your child, but also supports staff and is in line with teacher union guidance. For this reason too, we will not carry out any live camera links for safeguarding reasons. Whilst it would be nice to see one another, staff do not feel comfortable doing this in the privacy of their own homes and we need to respect that. Can we request if your child is chosen for the trial and takes part, that they do so representing the personal excellence values we stand for. Otherwise, we will be unable to offer them this opportunity.

These times are new and anxious for us all. Our staff are amazing and we've not met one teacher who doesn't care or doesn't want to do their very best by you. We just ask that you bear with us. We are slowly becoming experts in technology, but we are learning on the job and as quickly as we can.

Finally, our plan is that after half term, Year 9 will focus entirely on the subjects they have chosen for their options. Preparatory work will be sent for their choices and core subjects will continue to set work too. Again, we have listened to parent and student feedback on this and we hope this will help motivate your son or daughter into focusing on their GCSEs now.

Thanks again for all the positive feedback. It has been lovely to receive such positive comments from you, it does spur us on to go the extra mile for your children and ensure we are always the very best we can be. We know that they have one chance at their education and we will do our utmost to provide the best quality from a distance.

Yours sincerely,

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