



3 February 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students of Senior School and Sixth Form

I hope my letter finds you well as we near the end of the second week of the firebreak lockdown.

I am incredibly grateful to colleagues for going more than the extra mile and know that many are like the proverbial swan, who appear to be gracefully floating on the surface, whilst frantically kicking below to stay afloat. This may also resonate with parents and students! Your words of support and the actions of the students in lessons can make such a difference. Teamwork, communication and kindness, which are highly valued in College, have never been more important to ensuring that we can all be the best that we can be and to support the well-being of everyone. Thank you for all that you have done, are doing and will do. It is appreciated.

During the last lockdown, our provision was kept under constant review and feedback was helpful to us in adjusting and trying to keep well-being at the core of all we do. The most recent Remote Learning Guidance policy was written on the understanding that there would be the option for adults in school to have Key Worker status, which would help balance home and school when Remote Learning was taking place. This has not been available during the current lockdown, and with the potential for this continuing after half-term, the following adjustments are being made which we hope will help both teachers and students alike.

Homework

This continues to be at the teacher's discretion, and it is anticipated that little, if any, will be set for the half-term break.

Attendance

Attendance is monitored throughout the day in lessons, Tutor Time and assemblies. We will follow up missed lessons, where we have not been made aware of a reason for absence, which parents and guardians should communicate through the usual channels please.

Single lessons

Many subjects have single lessons, which compliment longer periods of time in the working week. We have noted that registering the students, starting the lesson punctually and providing a lesson, (with "fresh air" time), can make these lessons hard to get a balance. After half-term, (and at the teacher's discretion), the work for the single lessons only may be set on Teams, without the teacher being present at the start. The teacher will ensure that a deadline for the work to be completed is clear and, if using this option for their subject, no additional homework will be set. If students do not complete the tasks set for these single lessons, this will be followed up, initially by the teacher with the child and then more formally with

parents. We hope that we have your support with this and believe it reflects our continued focus on well-being and how we are keen to adjust, reduce some pressure and preserve our core education.

I also hope that this information may be of interest to you? The Education Endowment Foundation did some research on remote (Distance) learning last April. This meta-analysis of over 60 studies found that:

- Teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered
- Peer interactions can provide motivation and improve learning outcomes
- Supporting pupils to work independently can improve learning outcomes
- Different approaches to remote learning suit different types of content and pupils

For a one page summary of the findings, please see here

https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Covid-19_Resources/Remote_learning_evidence_review/Rapid_Evidence_Assessment_summary.pdf

Our Remote Learning Guidance policy will be amended, in due course, and we will continue to adapt it in the light of new developments.

In January, our theme for the month was Resilience and all assemblies explored this. It is almost as if Mr Henderson, who manages our themes and co-ordinates these, has some insight into the fact that our resilience would be tested by the end of the month. I hope that you have settled into lockdown and remote learning and will enjoy the theme for February, which is: “Is knowledge power?”, with this to be explored and developed after half-term, when it will be National Science Week.

Stay safe, stay well, stay in touch and may I wish you a good half-term break.

Yours sincerely



Ashley Clancy
Principal