22 January 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers,

As we come to the end of our third week of remote learning, we have been taking feedback from students and staff, along with Year 7 parents, to see what is working well and how we can adapt our approach moving forwards. A key issue that has been raised is the extended periods of screen time with limited breaks. We believe we can make some simple adaptations to improve this, building into our school day more significant break-times and providing a 10-minute slot between lessons to allow students to upload work and change class Team, and to allow staff to upload resources for their next lesson.

In summary, the following changes to the school day will be made from Monday 25 January:

·         reduce registration to 15 minutes.

         increase break to 30 minutes.

         increase lunchtime to one hour.

         build in ‘upload’ time between period 1/2 and period 4/5.

The school day will therefore be: 

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Registration* | 8:45-9:00 am |
| **Period 1** | **9:00-9:55 am** |
| *Upload time (KS3 lessons)* | 9:55-10:05 am |
| **Period 2** | **10:05-11:00 am** |
| *Break* | 11:00-11:30 am |
| **Period 3** | **11:30-12:30 pm** |
| *Lunch* | 12:30-1:30 pm |
| **Period 4** | **1:30-2:25 pm** |
| *Upload time (KS3 lessons)* | 2:25-2:35 pm |
| **Period 5** | **2:35-3:30 pm** |

***Registration is a compulsory part of the school day and non-attendance will be followed up by SPLs, as with non-attendance to lessons.***

**Live Teaching and Independent Learning**

As much as is possible, teachers are delivering the curriculum that has been planned for face-to-face learning. In order to have a sustainable delivery model and to ensure we continue to develop the skills that would be supported in face-to-face teaching and learning, we have reviewed ***the balance between ‘teacher-led’ remote lessons and ‘independent’ work***. Each faculty has set out the shared expectations across their subject for each year group, in terms of the balance between ‘live learning’ and ‘independent learning’ at Key Stage 3: you can look at the expectations for independent learning in the document attached to this e-mail.

The current timetable for **Key Stage 4** (Years 10 & 11) lends itself to a more obvious balance between ‘teacher-led’ lessons and independent work. However, we have set out our expectations at Key Stage 3 to have a shared understanding with parents, staff, and students of the appropriate balance between ‘teacher-led’ lessons and ‘independent’ work.

For **Key Stage 3** (Years 7-9) lessons focused on ***guided independent work***, ***the expectation is*** that students will initially come together with the teacher for between 5 and 10 minutes at the start of the lesson, where the work will be explained and any questions answered. The teams meeting will then end and students will be able to complete the work set independently (and mainly in their exercise book), using the Teams chat function to ask for support should they need it. The expectation is that completed work is uploaded onto ‘assignments’ at the end of an ‘independent’ lesson.

We have asked staff where possible to ensure that ***the majority of work is planned to be completed in exercise books,*** to ensure that when working independently students are getting a break from screen time. For some subjects, such as Computing, on-line work is the most appropriate format. For subjects such as Maths, that have a range of on-line platforms that we already utilize, this is also the case.

We are aware that students may need ***new exercise books*** to complete work and are building in collection times for these to be issued - you will receive further details of this. Please do not request to collect resources or materials from school outside of the designated collection times that we schedule.

For clarification, ***students will not be set additional homework*** to complete outside of the lesson time.

To***support Year 11 students*** in what is a particularly challenging time, we will ***be allocating PSHE lessons*** to students to use in order to explore their own next steps either by using the Start programme to explore career options, to watch webinars from Speakers for Schools or Sixth Form College Open Day recordings and to complete their college applications. They will not be expected to register at this time for their lesson.

Towards the end of the half term, we hope to have had a clearer indication from the government as to whether this period of remote education will continue. If it is to continue, ***we will again review our provision and will seek the views of Year 8-11 parents***.

Many thanks for all the kind words of support and gratitude that we have received from so many parents over the last 3 weeks.

Kind regards

Ms Kennedy  
Deputy Headteacher