

Welcome back to the new term of Remote Learning at Balshaw's!

Dear All

I hope that your families are well, but I also know that more and more of us are being touched by impact of Covid-19; both the illness itself and the lockdown in place to try to reduce its impact. It has been great to hear of stories of how different students in the Balshaw's family have been doing their bit to raise spirits and support others during lockdown. I have also seen some great pieces of work being completed by students and was able to issue a number of Headteacher Commendations before the start of the Easter holiday.

It is strange not to have been fundraising for our Lenten Charities before Easter and we would normally be well on our way with preparing for Spring Fair at the moment which is always a great chance to see people across the school community coming together.

So, what should we expect this term? Well, it is hard to make many long term predictions of anything at the moment, but some things will certainly be happening, so let me update you...

Remote Learning – listening to feedback:

There has been lots of positive feedback about the communication that you have been getting from school and also the work that your teachers are setting. If there is one concern that is coming through, it is that some families are struggling to keep on top of the work and students are worried about getting through all of the work. This is true nationally and a number of initiatives have been announced today to support parents which I will discuss further on.

We have listened to these concerns and are making some modifications to how we are setting remote learning and the amount of learning that we are setting for **Years 7 - 9**:

- Research and feedback suggests that approximately three hours per day of independent learning is about the amount of learning that a young person can reasonable manage in an otherwise unsupported way.
- Each subject will now set one hour of work per week and two hours in English, Maths and Science. This means that each student will have about three hours of work per day (15 hours per week). We believe that this is much more manageable. It is not a maximum and there are many more resources that students can access if they want to.
- Year 10 will continue to be set more work as they are working their way through their GCSE courses and it is important that they keep up-to-date with their learning. They will have more than one hour per week from their GCSE subject teachers, but we are aiming to keep this clear and manageable.
- All of this work will be set using ClassCharts at the start of each week so that students can organise their learning in the way that suits them best. The table below shows how work might be broken down over the

week, but this is just one way – there are better ways to break this up and this is only a suggestion. You may find that it is better to do 25 minutes of Maths every day rather than trying to do it all at once.

KS3	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Session 1	English	MFL	Maths	Tech	Science
Lunch					
Session 2	Geography	Art/Music	History	Computing/PE	RE

KS4	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Session 1	English	Opt C	Maths	Food/Tech	Science
Lunch					
Session 2	Geog or History	Opt A	History	Opt B	Compulsory PE/ Short course RE

The tables above are suggestions only. How you divide your learning up over the week is up to you...

- Emails are for you to use to ask any questions that you have of your teachers and to submit any work that they have requested or that you would like feedback for. Your teachers will not email you – all your work will be on ClassCharts. This means that you have fewer places to worry about checking.
- Some students are worried that if every piece of work has not been done that they will get detentions when we return to school. This is not true. This is a worry expressed most commonly by those students who are already working very hard! It is true that all students are expected to be doing school work during lockdown though.

National Initiatives for Remote Learning:

The Government has made a number of announcements today about remote learning initiatives and support strategies. These do not replace the work that is being set by Balshaw's, but they are useful resources for you to use to enhance and enrich what we have put in place. These are endorsements rather than direct government initiatives. There are three main announcements.

1. **The BBC launches its Bitesize Daily Timetable from tomorrow:**

The BBC are supporting parents and schools by issuing a daily timetabled schedule of lessons on the BBC website. The image on the left shows the timetable for this week. If you have younger children in the house, there are timetables for Key Stage 1 and 2 also.

You can access the BBC Daily Learning at:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons>

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Maths	English	Chemistry	Maths	English
English	Biology	Maths	English	Physics
History	Geography	Spanish	Religious Studies	Music

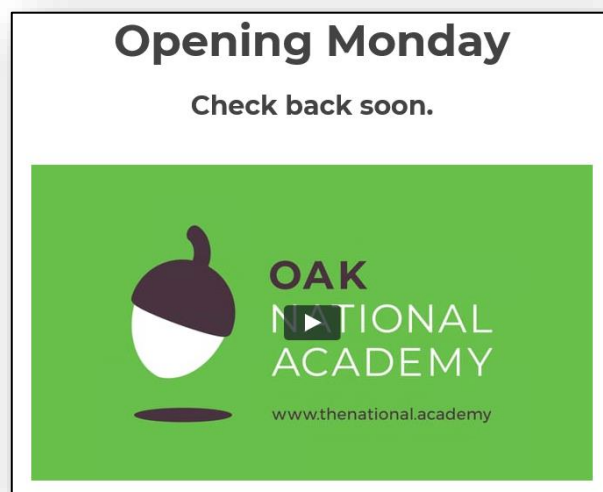
2. **Oak National Academy Online launches tomorrow:**

Another free online resource launches tomorrow as well called the Oak National Academy. This website will be delivering 180 lessons from teachers across a range of schools every week. The page will come online tomorrow, but the homepage has a video about the resource until it goes live:

<https://www.thenational.academy/>

3. **Government announces laptops and 4G routers to support disadvantaged pupils:**

This is a dramatic announcement, but it is not quite as wide or as clear as the headlines might suggest. It is only for Year 10 students, it is not clear yet how this will be implemented, how students will be identified, who will pay for it and how they will be distributed or who owns them. As a school we already support disadvantaged students with computer access. When more information becomes available on this, we will communicate directly with those who will be able to take advantage of this support.



Caring for Your Child's Wellbeing:

The School Nursing Team:

The School Nursing Service is still operational and is keen to let all parents and students know about their services. I have included two communication posters from them at the end of this update.

Telephone call for your child from their tutor:

Over the next week you will get telephone call from your child's tutor. This is just to catch up with them, ask how they are getting on and for them to have the chance to keep in touch with an adult from school. I know that my own children really like getting the chance to speak to the teachers from their primary school. It's a much bigger task in a high school, but we want to make sure that your child knows that we are still thinking about them and care about their wellbeing.

In Summary:

These are tough times for many, but I know that you are doing all that you can to create positive memories for your children. Despite speculation in the press that schools may partially reopen in three weeks, I think that it is very dangerous to engage in such speculation.

Schools were closed when 40 – 80 people were dying per week, currently there are 800+ dying per day. I read a good analogy with lockdown today: when your parachute slows down your descent, this is not a reason to remove your parachute.

Stay home, stay safe and remember in your prayers all those who are having to go out to work to care for others or provide vital services.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Haycocks".

Mr Steven Haycocks

School nursing provision and support during COVID-19 outbreak

As a team we wanted to reach out to all our schools and let you know we are still here and able to offer support during this extremely difficult time. We will continue to be available for all schools, pupils and their families for phone consultation and advice. We are maintaining our support for vulnerable families and our safeguarding duties remain a priority.

Through working with our partner agencies we are gathering information regarding what support is available from services both within the health service and the wider community.

Please circulate this information through your communications with pupils and families. We want to help and support them as much as we can. Please call us if you feel we can be of help.

We can be contacted via telephone or email:
0300 247 0040- option 1
Vcl.019.singlepointofaccess@nhs.net

From all of the school nursing team, we wish you all the very best and hope to see you all healthy and happy in the near future.

IF YOU'RE **11-19** YEARS OLD **TEXT YOUR SCHOOL NURSE**

07507330510

WE HELP STUDENTS WITH ALL KINDS OF THINGS LIKE...

EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELLBEING **BULLYING**
SELF ALCOHOL HARM **SMOKING**
DRUGS **HEALTHY EATING** **SEXUAL**
CONTRACEPTION **HEALTH**

Text us for confidential advice & support

We do not usually inform your parents, teachers or anyone else if you contact the school nurse. We might inform someone if we were concerned about your safety, but we would usually speak to you first. Your messages are stored and can be seen by other healthcare staff who follow the same confidentiality rules. We aim to reply to you within one working day and you should get an immediate bounce-back to confirm we received your text. Texts will not be seen outside of normal working hours. If you need help before you hear back from us, contact a member of school staff or your doctor. Our text number does not receive voice calls or MMS picture messages. We support messaging from UK mobile numbers only (which does not include messages sent from landlines, international mobile numbers and some 'number masking' mobile apps). Prevent the school nurse from sending messages to you by texting STOP to our number. Please respect your schools mobile phone policy. Messages are charged at your usual rate.