



Bishop Rawstorne Church of England Academy



10 February 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

I am writing to you to express my gratitude for the support you have given to school in supporting your child's education. I understand how challenging it can be maintaining motivation over a sustained period of time, and that is not easy when many of you are also having to work from home or have to go out to work and leave your child to it. Both situations are less than ideal but we continue to work on improvements to our remote learning offer to try and take away as much of the pressure from you as we can.

Our expectation remains the same in that students should be turning up for remote lessons at the start of the timetabled period with instructions given to students about what they have to do in the hour. This removes any ambiguity around expectations communicated from the teacher to the students. It also keeps students attuned to the rhythms of the school day which is important in what could otherwise be a fairly unstructured period of their lives. We have been looking at how to balance time spent by students on independent study against direct teacher instruction. So, we are looking to balance teacher talk against students getting on with activities wherever possible. I am acutely aware of how screen hours are mounting up over the course of a week and we will continue to hone our teaching to try to give students a break from screens wherever possible.

Mr Duckworth has tried to alleviate some of your worries about attendance and I would back him up by saying that if you get an attendance flag through SIMS it is only intended to communicate to you that your child has missed the lesson. If you are already aware of this then that is fine and we will not be using these figures in our official attendance returns to the DfE unless they change their policy.

We are currently working on remote parents' meetings – I won't call them evenings as we are looking at spreading the appointments out over part of the normal working day and part of the evening to accommodate those parents who cannot meet remotely during the normal school day. On those days we will be asking students to do something a little different to normal and we will try to make it screen free so that you have access to a screen for the meetings with your child's teachers. We intend to start with our youngest students as we have not had any formal progress meetings with parents of year 7 yet. We will then work our way up through the year groups. We are also holding off from our older students' parents' meetings as we are awaiting the final arrangements for GCSEs, and we want to be as informed as possible before we talk to parents.

I wish I could tell you with certainty at this time that we will be back to school on the 8 March. However, you all watch the news and read the papers and the latest mutated strains appear to be setting us back. Be assured that we will continue to develop our provision as much as we can to support your child.

As ever, if you require support in any way, from helping you to sort out technology to help with your child's mental health, please get in touch.

Hopefully you will all have time to 'de-school' your homes for the next week and I wish you all the very best for the half term holiday.

Yours sincerely

Paul Cowley
Headteacher

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