

8th January 2021



Success nothing less

Dear Parent/Carer,

Remote Learning & COVID-19 Testing

Firstly, I would like to wish you all a happy new year and I hope that, despite the obvious restrictions you all had an enjoyable Christmas holiday. Unfortunately, as the new year dawns we find ourselves in another national lockdown. However, as always, we intend to work tirelessly to support all our children, whether that be in school as part of the critical worker/vulnerable children groups or for the majority of children as part of our remote learning offer.

The main vehicle for our remote learning offer is Google classroom and all the information about how to access the work is on our website along with all the necessary class codes and a summary of the expectations. It is vital for your child's progress that they complete all the work set. It is unacceptable for students not to engage with their teachers and keep up with their learning. The majority of lessons on Google classroom will have a teacher commentary with clear explanations and instructions as what should be completed. Other lessons will involve live teaching with clearly defined tasks. Help and support is available during school hours via their teacher through the Google Classroom if they have any problems. Similarly, each subject has an email address to which queries can be sent. These are manned by Directors of subject and questions posed will be answered promptly. Images of paper and workbook-based work can also be submitted via the email addresses. All children should follow their normal timetable. A copy of each bubble class timetable is available on the website to remind students of their lessons.

Each family will also receive weekly wellbeing calls to ensure that your child has everything they need to access and complete the work online. The calls also provide an opportunity for you, as parents and carers, to provide us with constructive feedback to help us improve our service. Parental and student questionnaires will also be sent out periodically for completion with aim of garnering your feedback so that we can improve our provision.

As you are aware we have surveyed all families to identify the students that do not have appropriate technology at home so that we can do our best to provide a suitable device to enable all children to access our online offer. These devices are in the process of being made available for collection. We do, however, have a limited number of devices to loan to families and, therefore, we have had to prioritise the current allocation based on need. We are expecting the Government to provide us with more devices in the coming weeks and, once we have them, we will distribute accordingly.

Free Schools meals are available as weekly food parcels from the main reception. The vouchers we supplied over the Christmas holidays are not available as we have an ongoing catering contract with Blackpool Council to supply all of our food during term time. We simply do not have the budgetary funds to pay the contract and the voucher company. If central Government offer to fund the vouchers as they did in the summer term then we will switch to them.

From Monday 11th January we plan to open our rapid testing centre on the school site. Staff will be tested weekly and students (only those currently attending school) will also be tested twice – 3-5 days – apart and again if they are tracked as a close contact of a positive case. This will enable us to identify asymptomatic cases and, therefore, support the reduction in community transmission of the virus. Consent forms have been sent home for those children attending the critical worker/vulnerable groups in school.

It is a trying time for all of us and we will endeavour to support each of our families to the very best of our ability. If you have any general queries or concerns or feedback you would like to provide either contact us via remoteteaching@aspire.fcat.org.uk or on (01253) 353155.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Woods
Headteacher