



GARSTANG COMMUNITY ACADEMY

Bowgreave · Garstang · Lancashire · PR3 1YE · Tel: 01995 603226 · Email:
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8th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Well, what a week it has been, wonderfully humbling in many ways and frustrating in others – I will try to address all important issues which have arisen since Monday below.

Remote Learning & ‘Live’ Lessons:

The most important thing to say is WELL DONE!! Well done to every one of you, and all the staff at GCA for providing the infrastructure for this to happen in school and in your homes, and the quality of what is being expected, delivered and achieved – I am in total awe of you all.

We have had nearly 100% engagement this week and are still working hard to help a small number of families to overcome their technical difficulties – please keep letting us know if you are struggling.

We have allocated over 8000 award points since Monday!

We do send out regular alerts to let parents know if children haven’t submitted a piece of work for every lesson – we understand that in some cases there are genuine reasons for this but feel that in the vast majority of cases you would want to know. Although this appears to be logged as a consequence, this is due to the processing of this list, and no behaviour points are actually allocated.

To simplify things a little for the on-site provision and for Live Lessons, we have decided to revert to a single day timings for all year groups, and from Monday, adopting the following model

- Start of day – 9.00
- P1 9.10 - 10.10
- Break 10.10 – 10.30
- P2 10.30 - 11.30
- P3 11.30 - 12.30
- Lunch 12.30 – 1.05
- P4 1.05 - 2.05
- P5 2.05 - 3.05

Please encourage your children to work to this timetable as the Live Lessons will follow these timings. (Please note that some Teams lessons may have already been sent out with current times on them, and children should adopt the new timings for those sessions.)

Please continue to keep a handle on children’s internet/online use – keep checking what sites they are accessing, keep parental controls and web filters at sufficiently high settings and do have a look at the



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useful resources under our E-safety button on the website. If children, or you, have any concerns, please just contact us through the usual channels, or via the 'Keep Me Safe' button on the website.

Live Lessons have been happening for Year 11 this week and have gone really well. Mrs Rawcliffe will send out a schedule for other year groups over the weekend.

For children who have not had a Live Lesson yet, please make sure they read the protocols in the documents under the Remote Learning tab on the website which include safeguarding protocols. Children may find it difficult to locate the live lessons on Teams if they aren't used to it, so we will send a short 'loomed' video to help with this. Essentially, children should log in to Teams via the Office 365 link on the website (same log-in details as to get on Synergy) and then click on their calendar within Teams – each Live Lesson should then appear in their calendar and they can then click 'join' to take part.

It's worth noting that some Live Lessons will have a relatively short live teacher element, while others may take longer before children are asked to continue with their work.

Please be gentle with us for a while – a full schedule of Live Lessons is quite daunting, and there are a number of staff who haven't delivered one yet.

Vulnerable and Critical Worker Provision:

This has gone really well all week but is getting quite busy. Critical Workers - please only use us if you really need to.

To protect themselves, other children and staff, from Monday, children will be required to wear their face masks at all times inside, including at all times in the provision rooms.

As long as we have the necessary consent, children in the provision will be tested twice for C19 next week using the Lateral Flow Devices.

Mass testing:

The first staff have been tested this week, and we are ready to go with Provision children next week (see above.)

If you would like to volunteer to help out with this at all, we are putting together a bank of volunteers who we may use over the coming weeks. If you would like to volunteer, please email lsmith@garstangcommunityacademy.com to let her know, thank you.



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Free School Meals:

Mrs Smith will be contacting eligible families regarding Free School Meal provision during Lockdown.

Year 11 Exams:

Effectively, Year 11 exams have been cancelled by the Government.

My personal view, is that this is very sad, and that we and our students would have relished the opportunity for students to take their exams on a completely level playing field. However, this is not possible, and the children must not worry about it. Although there is much thought yet to go into how final qualification grades (Centre/Teacher Assessed) will actually be arrived at, we will make sure we are rigorous and fair and aim to ensure that children do not suffer as a result of this announcement.

I will continue to communicate with Year 11 parents, as and when I get any further guidance.

As ever, please keep in contact with us and encourage your children to keep engaging, keep submitting, and keep communicating.

We will, as always, get through this together.

Very best wishes, and stay safe

Alasdair Ashcroft
Headteacher