



Kirkburton Middle School

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6th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you are well this morning. This letter is a quick response to our first full day of live lessons yesterday. Overall we feel things went very well and it was great to see so many pupils online. As with anything new, there were some teething problems and we are aware that things were far from perfect. We are working hard to address any issues and we are sure we'll have things up to speed in no time.

Some of the key problems from yesterday were-

1. Pupils not invited to lesson – There have been some issues with pupils being missing from the Teams. We have now added the ones that we know about and teachers are adding these pupils to the live lessons that they have already been invited to. If your child has not been invited to a lesson please email that teacher directly. We recognise this was very upsetting for some pupils yesterday and we are very sorry for this.

2. Connectivity – This is a big issue. Some pupils cannot connect at all, some can't see videos, some can't see images, some see video as blurry. In the current climate, whole streets are online at the moment (much as happens in an evening usually) which affects the contention ratio at the local broadband exchange. This is one of the biggest problems with the UK's current broadband infrastructure and it means that when a lot of people are online in an area, speeds and reliability drop massively for home connections. This seemed to be a major problem between 9-10am. We have a theory that this issue is due to work teams holding their morning meetings at this time as things seemed to improve as the day went on. We would be interested to hear from anybody who could confirm this or who can offer any advice in terms of connectivity. **Please let us know, via the online form, if connectivity becomes an ongoing issue. We can apply to the government for mobile routers to support with this.**

3. Accessing files, watching PowerPoints whilst in live lesson - Some pupils cannot see PowerPoints if we share them within Teams, only if we share the whole screen. Some cannot access any other part of Teams (Assignments, Files, Posts/Chat etc) if they are in a video call. This seems to be a particular issue on tablets and Apple devices. Some pupils have been able to help each other out online with these, finding a way for their particular device of switching between screens.

We are working on the invites issue, the rest are issues that we cannot control from school. We are looking at ways of reducing the load on bandwidth (less video etc) and timings of lessons. The following are suggestions that may help you at home.

- Close and try again (exit the meeting and join again, it works a lot of the time!)
- Use the Teams apps/programs rather than in a web browser - <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-365/microsoft-teams/download-app>



We are also trailing accessing Teams via a Microsoft X Box as we feel this may help with access to lessons for some households. We'll let you know when we have more information about this.

Reporting problems

In order to streamline our response to technical issues, we would ask you report any problems via the online form below. This will be monitored throughout the day and somebody will get back to you as soon as they can.

[Live lessons technical issues reporting form](#)

There will not be a live lesson period 1 on Monday as induction will be taking place on the school site. Staff will set work for this lesson via Teams assignments for pupils to complete independently.

In the meantime, thank you for your ongoing support with what is a massive operation. In effect, we have moved business premises overnight and with no notice. Please be assured we are working extremely hard in order to ensure continuity of education for all our pupils.

As ever, we welcome all feedback – both developmental and positive.

Yours sincerely,



Mr C Taylor
Headteacher

Lockdown School Day (off site)

Period 1: 9.00 – 9.50

Period 2: 10.00 – 10.50

Period 3: 11.10 – 12.00

Class time: 1.00 – 1.20 (Mon, Wed, Fri)

Period 4: 1.30 – 2.20

Period 5: 2.30 – 3.20