

5th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following the announcement last night that the country has entered another period of lockdown, I wanted to write to let you know a few things as they stand. There will be a flurry of communications in these first few days as we find out more each hour about government plans and guidance. Whilst we can't second guess this, I want to take this opportunity to reinforce a few key things from LSA and start to give a clearer picture of how this version of lockdown will work.

Wednesday 6th, Thursday 7th and Friday 8th January

Remote learning lessons are available for all students. These lessons were already planned and were based on the original idea of being online for a few days. We would ask students to use Teams and Satchel:One, watch their assemblies from the team of Assistant Headteachers, structure their days around their timetabled lessons. Please remember to set alarm clocks nice and early to be ready for a return to learning!

Moving Forward

We recognise that the move to a six-week lockdown changes the needs and plans we had in place. We are working on a document for all parents and students that will make the move to an extended period of remote learning as easy as possible. We will have a mixture of live lessons, recorded lessons and interactive resources to provide the best possible resources. We will also signpost families to a range of supportive materials that will supplement online learning (i.e. BBC etc).

Variability/opinion

Schools can be unpredictable places, with the potential for many things to impact learning. This remains the same during a period of remote education where we expect teachers and subjects to deliver in ways that suit their children the best. Staff and students fall victim to technical issues or even illness. There is no "agreed way" to teach in a classroom, not online. The key thing is that whatever we do is effective. Every house is different, and every family will have different pressures. Our ultimate aim over the next six weeks is to keep children learning, keep children engaged and manage a difficult situation in a way that is realistic and understanding. We know the next six weeks will be difficult for everyone, but we have a remote learning package that works, and we will combine this with the best possible pastoral care both remotely and in school.

Support

We have collated access to a number of resources that are designed to support families during this difficult time. Tracy Lawson, our Designated Safeguarding Lead has created the following page for convenience: <https://www.lythamhigh.lancs.sch.uk/parents/support-for-parents-carers-and-students-during-coronavirus>

Those families requiring support or struggling to access the education online will work with a team of Assistant Headteachers, Jamie Howard (year 9 and 10), Alison Donnelly (year 11) and Nick Bracken (year 7 and 8). All pastoral needs will be managed through work with the Heads of Year. We will provide a full list of email addresses so that you can contact the right people directly.

Further information to come this week

We will issue more guidance and advice around the development of online learning to parents this week, ready for the lessons next week. Danell Dearden, Assistant Headteacher will write in due course. In the meantime, please click here to see what is already in place: <https://lythamhigh.lancs.sch.uk/our-remote-learning-strategy>

Childcare Provision

Those families that have been successful in securing a place in the supervision facility (Children of Key Workers) will receive updates and information from Gill Clegg, Deputy Headteacher. The supervision will allow students to access the online resources provided by teachers for all other students. Sara Cardno (Deputy Headteacher) will be working directly with families to provide provision for children needing increased levels of support.

Final Comment

Preparing for this lockdown feels very different to where we were in March. We have learned lessons and we now feel we have genuine expertise and experience to call upon in terms of how we teach online. We are also far more realistic about what we can achieve. After a difficult few weeks of government announcements, it is critical that we keep in mind that we have entered a lockdown for serious reasons. We are being asked to stay at home to protect the NHS and ultimately save lives. This is a heavy responsibility for us all to share but we have to remember at the start of this lockdown period that our key focus is to keep our children and staff safe, so that they can keep learning whilst not increasing risk to their families. It is difficult situation for everyone that is changing daily again, so thank you all again for your understanding and support.

Yours sincerely,



Ray Baker
Headteacher