

12 February 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

I hope this update before we go into our half term break, continues to find you and your families well. Whilst we may not be able to go anywhere or do too much, it is a break non the less and I hope we can all find some time to switch off our screens and focus our attentions on more leisurely pursuits for a time.

You spoke – we listened – now it's time to 'Get Digitally Organised'

As you know, here at Priory, we are always appreciative of your feedback to help support the learning of our pupils. Following on from our recent positive parent survey, one of the main areas to address was the pupil submission of work when completing tasks and assignments online. As a result, our dedicated staff team of Microsoft ambassadors here in school have been working hard to ensure a more effective and efficient process of completion and submission of work.

Following the half term break then, pupils will be asked to 'Get Digitally Organised' and as a school, most online classes will be using Class Notebook and OneNote. This will ensure that teachers can virtually monitor work completed by students as they would in a classroom and give more timely and accurate feedback on the work being produced. This should help to further strengthen both the quality of work produced and the dialogue between pupil and teacher.

Class Notebook and OneNote both run via the Teams platform and will be set up automatically by teachers in the online Teams classes.

For further support on how to use Class Notebook, students can visit this video tutorial on our school website at <https://www.priory.lancs.sch.uk/pupils/office-365>

It is important to remember that students should ask for support if they are unsure on how to successfully use Class Notebook and ask for guidance from their class teacher. The use of Class Notebook will be the expectation as we move forward, not the exception.

Further to this, students will be submitting assessed pieces of work via the Assignments tool in Teams. Teachers will make their expectations regarding this clear after the half term break, but this should ensure that all necessary assessed pieces of work are securely stored on the Teams platform, enabling a record of evidence of work and the ability to find all personalised feedback in one place.

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In addition, by using Assignments for homework and submission of work, you as parents and carers will be able to track and monitor submission of work and work set by teachers to help support your son or daughter. We hope to have this function available for you to interact with very soon.

Catch Up or Targeted Support?

You may be aware of the recent, well-publicised proposals around so-called 'catch-up'. This speculation about such things as extending the school day and summer term to help children catch-up with lost learning is, I feel, unhelpful.

A blanket requirement to grind out more hours of learning from tired children with the likelihood of diminishing returns is a concern.

So please reassure your sons and daughters and tell them not to worry. As I've said before, our approach to live lessons and our pupils' engagement in them, means that when they can return to school, they will do so by simply continuing with their learning, their next lesson, but in school rather than at home.

And rather than a blanket approach to 'catch up', when our pupils return, we will instead look to focus on the differential impact the pandemic and subsequent remote learning has had on pupils and introduce targeted support where necessary.

We will look to pause and consider what our pupils, affected by a situation which none of us have experienced before, really need in order to recover and thrive and then focus relentlessly on interventions which have a strong likelihood of helping each of them as individuals.

Quality, not quantity, will be the watchword.

This 'targeted support' approach rather than mass 'catch up', we believe, will give each of our pupils the best chance to thrive moving forward once they return.

Finally

So, thank you for all you are doing and will continue to do at home as we manage through the next few challenging weeks and months.

I hope you can take a break over half term.

Please make the very most of it and we look forward to working closely with you; Priory, Pupils and Parents, in the months to come.

Yours faithfully



Mr M Eastham
Headteacher