

**Remote Learning Update – Half Term Summary 5.2.2021**

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of our first half term of ‘Virtual School’ I write to thank you for your ongoing support and share some further information with you. I also take this opportunity to congratulate all of our pupils who have strived to continue to learn and shown true resilience and maturity in recent weeks.

Summary of letter contents:

* Our offer and expectations
* Key information – Finish Off Friday 12th February 2021
* Well-being – I ‘Wish my Teacher Knew’ email system
* Frequently asked Questions

**Our Offer and expectations**

**The three-part structure of supporting learning in our Virtual School:**

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| **Online Live Lessons** | **SMHW Subject tasks per week** | **SMHW Assessment/Submission Task for feedback** |
| 50% timetable delivered via MS Teams  **Prioritise attendance to these lessons.** | Weekly task per subject to supplement online Live Lessons. **No submission required.** | Weekly submission task – set per subject.  **Submission Recommended.** |
| Lesson will be delivered to pupils through MS Teams. Pupils should participate using the chat function.  Learning from these lessons will be utilised in assessment/submission tasks. | Pupils who are unable to attend Live Lesson should use these tasks to learn similar content.  Pupils who attend Live Lesson can use these to reinforce learning. | Pupils should use their learning to complete and submit the task. Submission method will be indicated by teacher and may be via SMHW or email. |

**\*Please refer to our letter on 15.1.2021 if you require further information or contact us.**

**Key Information**

**‘Finish Off Friday’ (FOF) – Friday 12th February**

To mark the end of a challenging half term we are planning a special day next Friday. Lessons will be suspended and replaced with an assembly and staff being available for support.

The main purpose of the day is to support mental health and enable pupils some consolidation and finishing off time so that they can enjoy a well-deserved Half Term break away from screens and online learning.

* Pupils will:
  + Receive a Head of Year celebration assembly with tutors attending (Teams invites to be issued early next week).
  + Have the day to catch–up and make submissions of assessment tasks on SMHW.
  + Be advised to contact staff via email if they require any additional support or feedback currently.

We have advised teaching staff that **no deadlines should be set on SMHW for the Half Term break** but SMHW will remain live for pupils who feel they want to use this facility.

**School will remain open for keyword pupils on Friday 12thFeb** and we plan to offer them some alternative activities in addition to finishing off time.

**Well-being Support**

**Well-being Activity - I Wish My Teacher to Knew**

Is your child really proud of something they have accomplished or are they finding things really difficult at the moment? I Wish My Teacher Knew would love to hear from them! We will shortly be sending an email to all of our students from our  [IWMTK@waseleyhills.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:IWMTK@waseleyhills.worcs.sch.uk)  email, please encourage your child to respond using their school email account.

**What to do if your child feels stressed or anxious:**

Pupil well-being is paramount and we would urge you to closely support your child and look for any signs of stress that may indicate they need to temporarily reduce their engagement with online learning. Should you be concerned please initially give your child the opportunity to **prioritise attending online Live Lessons** and reduce the time they spend on SMHW tasks. Should stress or anxiety levels remain a concern please contact your child’s tutor or Head of Year and they will be happy to give you further advice in how to manage workload.

We encourage all pupils to work within school hours, take regular breaks, and participate in light exercise daily.

**Early Help Information:** Parents and pupils can access additional information related to anxiety and stress on our website: <https://www.waseleyhills.worcs.sch.uk/parents/early-help-and-support>

**Parent Frequently Asked Questions**

**Can we have social interaction sessions?** We can see the value in this for well-being and would endorse parents arranging these sessions themselves and overseeing such activities. School groups are not constructed just of friendship groups and this is not ideal. The scale of a Secondary school means that sometimes activities achievable in a Primary School are less suitable to larger numbers of pupils. We also have no way of **safeguarding** pupils from screenshots of their image etc. and have experience of the challenging and often impossible task of attempting to remove material which has been shared against someone’s consent electronically.

**Why aren’t you offering cameras / sound on?** – As above we have no way to regulate or retrieve shared images of pupils if a violation occurs. This is a **safeguarding** issue that we have experienced and we have no way to stop the misuse of material and therefore remain cameras and microphones off. Data use for pupils and slow internet speeds are also an issue which is minimised by not having visual images in sessions with large numbers of pupils. Sound is equally difficult to manage as we experienced unidentifiable disruptions to lessons early on before we improved our security. We advise that if pupils wish to communicate with their friends they arrange this with their parents and it is supervised.

**Why is my child not receiving reward points?** - Currently with staff working remotely they are unable to access to system used to input reward points. As an alternative we have introduce a **postcard system** and they should check their email weekly. Pupils should aim to collect the postcards from all of their subjects. If they have not received any yet they should contribute more in online lessons and hopefully they should be the recipients of some postcards soon. They will also receive feedback for submissions via email or through SMHW.

**Can I have a report on my child’s progress?** – It is natural to seek comfort and information in these uncertain times but we would not usually report home this frequently but are investigating how we could share more information. Reporting on shorter periods of time comes with the health warnings of not being able to fully assess pupil progress and misleading accuracy from small variations such as illness or IT issues initially experienced by pupils. The impact of sending negative feedback home could further **increase pupil anxiety and lead to more disengagement.** At this time the positives are outweighed by these negatives and therefore we continue to feedback to pupils and parents via lessons and tutor calls etc. Please be reassured that we will contact you if we have a concern.

**What are my child’s predicted grades?**  – We are currently not in a position to issue predicted grades. We will provide information to colleges etc. if they require it to offer a place but this will not include predicted grades as there is too much uncertainty surrounding Centre Assessed Grades currently.

**My child is suffering from anxiety and appears unwell... how can I help them? –** Early help information is available on our school website – Parents -> Early Help. This page contains links to people who can help and factsheets with strategies to reduce anxiety etc. The guidance to manage workload is that attendance to online lessons is preferred, SMHW tasks can be considered less-essential, and assessment tasks are strongly advised but if a child is unwell we can reduce the expectation further and help them prioritise key subjects etc. Inform your child’s Head of Year / SENCO etc. and we will support you.

Kindest Regards,

Mr Baker – Assistant Headteacher (Teaching and Learning)