



TRUSTED  
*Schools' Partnership*

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**Headteacher:** Mr J Parr BA Hons

27<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

As we reach the end of what I am sure you will agree is a highly unusual week for us all, I am writing to firstly thank you and our fabulous students for your engagement with online learning, for bearing with us as we still try to find the right balance and of course, for your resilience! I am absolutely sure that the frustrations we may feel are put into context as we are reminded of the heroic efforts being made by others as they treat the unwell and provide critical services in the effort to fight the Coronavirus. Thank you, therefore, for adhering to the government directive 'to stay at home' in support of saving lives.

I must also thank our wonderful staff who have really stepped up to multiple challenges, including ongoing setting and monitoring of online learning, responding to emails from students and parents to provide guidance, face to face working to supervise the children of key workers and making telephone calls to parents and carers to ensure the well-being of the most in need. Thank you...what a team!

With regard to online work, we are listening carefully to feedback from students and parents/carers, with a common thread being that in many cases, there is too much work for an hour of timetabled lesson. We certainly do not want our students (or parents/carers!) feeling snowed under, especially when so many other things are being juggled in households. Learning should still be interesting and engaging, not highly stressful and unmanageable. Staff have received the message of concern about high volume of work and are going to scale back a bit. In support of this, from Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March, we are no longer setting work for lesson 3 each day for Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 & 9), to provide a 'buffer' between morning and afternoon learning. This, we hope, will provide a welcome time for any work completion from the morning, get a head start on the afternoon and the opportunity to enjoy some enrichment activity within households as routines becoming established. This is a best fit solution which, for the vast majority, will not 'hit' the same subject all of the time, therefore students will not be disadvantaged by missing work from a particular subject. At the moment, we will not alter the KS4 timetable, as we recognise that significant reduction of core subject learning might result. However, we are planning to scale back the volume of work for KS4 also. Thank you for your support with this and please do encourage your child/ren to keep up their reading and having a go at the Accelerated Reader quizzes!

For Year 11, Ofqual have confirmed they will outline the process by Easter that will be followed for GCSE grades to be awarded, to make sure grades are fair across schools and colleges, as well as the proposals for appeals. They will also share an update, as soon as possible, on the arrangements for additional exams in the new academic year. We will ensure that Year 11 students and parents/carers are kept fully informed as we receive information. We strongly encourage Year 11 students to be maintaining their

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revision work, which may be drawn upon should students wish to undertake additional exams as we go forward and also to ensure continuity of learning which would be helpful when starting Post 16 courses.

In the current situation, keeping track of where we are in the week and term is becoming tricky, but may I remind you that next week is the final week of Spring term, before what would normally have been Easter break. We have not yet received clear direction from the government about how we might operate our re-purposed school going forwards, however as soon as we have, I will ensure that you are informed. In the meantime, we have information for parents/carers on the homepage of the school website should you need to make contact about key worker childcare.

As you might imagine, there will be no edition of The Link this week, or until we return to what we hope will be school operating as we know it at the earliest opportunity. Until then, please look out for emailed or text communication, stay safe and very best wishes to you all and your families.

Kind regards

John Parr  
Headteacher