



Dear Students, Parents and Carers

Newsletter (17) 4th November 2020

It was lovely to meet parents at our virtual PTA Annual General Meeting last night. Thank you to the PTA for all your support. We will be ensuring parents hear more in the next few weeks about what the PTA does and how to get involved. I hope the regular newsletters are working well to keep you in touch with changes at school. There are some important messages today:

Reporting Absence

We have redesigned the reporting absences form through the Attendance tab on Parent Insight. Please make this your primary method of reporting an absence as it will reduce the need for further contact asking for additional information.

To ensure you are kept up to date with the latest Government and NHS advice we have also included on the form useful statutory guidance links regarding Covid symptoms and 'how to book a Coronavirus test.'

Full details regarding Attendance can be found using the following link <https://wgswitney.org.uk/attendance>.

Next Steps on Remote Learning - from Mr Goddard

Thank you for your help and support at the end of last term as we used the days we were closed to mass trial the use of Teams to deliver live lessons. Overall, the trials were very successful and we learnt a lot about how to deliver remote learning via Teams.

We are now in a position where we believe that if a student has to self-isolate, they should be able to follow their normal timetable, including the morning tutorial, through Teams. We are asking teachers to create invites for every lesson so if a student is off, they can either click on the link in the e-mail they get sent or go to their calendar in Teams where there should be an option to join the lesson.

We would ask that you bear with us if a student cannot access their timetabled lesson, especially if it is on the first day of their absence. The teacher may not be aware of an absence until later in the day once all absence messages have been checked and register codes updated. We hope you can appreciate that the picture is changing on a daily basis which makes it very hard for teachers to know how many students are self-isolating across all of their classes and for how long a student might be off for.

If a student knows they are going to have to self-isolate, they may want to e-mail their teacher directly to alert them as soon as they know to allow the teacher to be prepared in advance, rather than discovering the absence when they arrive at the lesson.

We would like to make it clear that these live lessons are only being made available to students who are having to self-isolate or who may have to stay at home as they have Coronavirus, but are well enough to work. If a student is too ill to be in school for any other reason, they should rest at home and come back to school to work and catch up when they feel better.

We also want to make it clear what we mean by having access to the teacher during the normal timetabled lesson. It does not always mean the teacher will be broadcasting live pictures or sound. It might be that work is set in the Teams page for the lesson and the teacher will be available to answer questions through the

conversation function on Teams. It might be a bit of audio explanation and then work to complete with the opportunity to get feedback from their teacher through typed questions or audio.

The teacher will decide the best way to allow the student who is self-isolating to continue with the lesson. As we are sure you are aware, providing education for students at home whilst also managing a class of students is a major challenge, so again we would ask for your patience and persistence. If a teacher isn't able to let a student join a lesson right at the start, please be patient until they are able to do so.

Any work done at home whilst a student is self-isolating should be kept at home and brought in for the teacher when the student returns to school. Please don't upload it to Insight or e-mail it to the teacher unless they ask specifically for it be sent in some kind of electronic format.

If you are having any issues with accessing Teams when at home, please e-mail the main school office in the first instance and these will then be forwarded to the appropriate people to answer your questions. We are aware, for instance, that occasionally some of the times shown for the lessons are given in US Pacific time! Please just ignore this; students should follow the times on their normal school timetables and go into Teams at those times. There will not be any PE lessons available via Teams, unless it is a GCSE or A-Level theory lesson.

Once again, thank you very much for your support and patience as we work to try and provide the best possible access to lessons and teachers in these challenging circumstances.

Use of Masks

As reported in Monday's newsletter, we will be starting our new mask policy from Thursday 5th November. Our approach is:

Masks must be worn by everyone (unless exempted) in all indoor areas except classrooms, and the hall/restaurant. This includes going between classrooms within villages.

At the end of each lesson, teachers will ask students to put on their masks so that everyone goes into the corridors wearing them, wherever they are in school. On entering their next room, students will remove their masks, then use hand-sanitizer. Hand sanitizer is provided in every room, but students may choose to bring their own too.

If you need your child to be exempt from wearing a mask, please [click here](#) to complete a form. Even if you have contacted us previously about this, please could you still complete this form, as we would like to confirm that we have a correct list as circumstances have changed so much.

Best wishes to all.



Mr R Shadbolt
Headteacher