



Principal **Nick Martin**  
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26<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. These are uncertain times and the academy is fully aware that many families are feeling anxious. We have a small team of staff on site every week day, with the rest of the staff working remotely; please remember that we are here to help if you need us. If your query is subject specific then the best person to contact, in the first instance, is your child's subject teacher. If your query is more pastoral, then please contact your child's PSO or Head of Year. They will respond to your questions via email as soon as they can.

When the academy suspected a school closure was imminent, staff uploaded 1-2 weeks' worth of work online. In most cases this is reviewing topics that have been taught this term, to consolidate your child's knowledge and understanding. All work has been set via Show My Homework. The volume of work may seem overwhelming, so below are some top tips for making home learning successful:

- The emotional wellbeing of your child is far more important than their education right now. If they are settled and able to focus, then completing school work is great, but if they are struggling and need some time then that is fine too. Don't compare your child to someone else's. You know them best and can judge accordingly.
- Where possible, let your child lead the learning, but if they are struggling to organise their day then we suggest they follow their usual Samuel Whitbread timetable. This will provide a clear routine for your child. They should log in and complete the work set by their teacher in that timetabled hour. They may not finish it all and that is fine. The work simply rolls over to the next timetabled session.
- Free online resources and software are great but the sheer amount can be confusing. Ask your child to select a few key sites and stick to those. This is far better than trying to engage with everything all at once.
- Although the majority of our work is set online, we strongly encourage you to monitor your child's screen time. Ensure they follow the government guidelines regarding social distancing and complete some form of daily physical exercise. Being active is vital for feeling happy and healthy. Opportunities to undertake practical and creative activities should also be scheduled.
- Remember, you don't have to do all the work with them. They should be working independently a lot of the time. Whilst we expect a level of challenge, teachers are setting achievable tasks.
- One of the most powerful things your child can do is read. Audible and Apple have made hundreds of audiobooks and e-books free. Access these via the Apple 'Books' app or the audible website <https://stories.audible.com/discovery>

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As it is highly likely the school closure will continue beyond the Easter holidays, we are currently in the process of producing a comprehensive Parent and Pupil Home Learning Guide. This will provide you and your child with clear instructions on how to manage their remote learning and preparation for the next phase of their learning journey. It will not only help you navigate the different learning platforms used by Samuel Whitbread, but it will also provide extension work and explain how we will be delivering new teaching and learning in the future.

Can I thank you once more for your continued support and words of encouragement during these difficult times.

Kind regards

Mrs C Linehan  
Vice Principal