



24 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Thank you for your continued understanding, kindness and support at this unusual time.

I wanted to take a moment to clarify our position with regards to online learning which I am hopeful that you're able to share with your child or children.

Naturally, our IT infrastructure has experienced a considerable upsurge in traffic over the past few days and many on line resources have been unable to cope with the demands that this has placed upon platforms and servers. As you will have already seen, the Academy placed communication on the website and its Twitter feed providing details of the technical difficulties that we currently face.

I am aware that this has caused additional anxiety and stress in an already pressurised system and wanted to make our position as an Academy clear to children and families.

Our online learning platform has been designed to provide all children with a continuity of provision that ensures that they continue to access learning and gain appropriate feedback through online discussions with class teachers. Work is set regularly by colleagues across the Academy and all children have access to these resources via their Academy email and their personal Microsoft One Note library.

The construction of this system was responsive to say the least and colleagues have worked tirelessly to ensure that pupils and students were able to continue with as much semblance of educational normality as possible. We are constantly reviewing our processes and procedures and are grateful for your continued forbearance as we move through the initial stages of our current situation.

Due to technical difficulties, some children may find it difficult to access work through no fault of their own. In addition, some families may find it increasingly frustrating that they are unable to access particular resources or print work out due to technical difficulties.

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Please be reassured that the issues that pupils are facing are of a technical nature and despite our best efforts, we are very much in the hands of technology. I know that some pupils may be feeling anxious or concerned that they are not completing work set which is only natural given how conscientious and diligent our pupils are. However, please reassure your children that during these very difficult times, the completion of work can only take place if they have access to it. Under no circumstances will any pupil be sanctioned for the incompleteness of work set. This is very important to relay to pupils.

Can I also be clear that pupils should not worry about any work that has been missed if they are feeling anxious about not completing work from the previous day/week due to the issues outlined above. Pupils should work through work set in at their own pace in their own way and should email their class teacher if they have questions relating to their work only. Please remind pupils that teachers are not technical experts and therefore will be unable to answer technical questions. By not asking teachers these questions, this could alleviate some of the frustrations that are currently being felt.

I am acutely aware that this is a stressful time for everyone and we are working hard to provide families with additional resource away from learning to help counteract the stresses and strains that are currently being felt. We are in the process of constructing a mental health and wellbeing section of our learning platform for pupils to access and we are looking at ways in which we can deliver whole crew and year group assemblies remotely to ensure that pupils continue to feel connected to our Academy whilst being away from the building.

Thank you once again for your continued support. I appreciate that these are hugely challenging times but your support enables us all to manage this quite unbelievable situation with the care, compassion and kindness that we have come to expect as an Academy community.

Please stay safe and healthy and look after yourselves and each other.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andy Seymour', written in a cursive style.

Andy Seymour
(Headteacher)

