

Friday 8th January 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

It's been a very busy week in terms of developments in school, most significantly the changes in return dates for pupils and the cancellation of exams, as well as the extension of home learning to 5 hours for all pupils in key stage 3 and 4.

New Arrangements for Home Learning

All pupils should now be able to access their home learning via the Google Classroom platform. As per the latest Government guidance, we will be providing all key stage 3 and 4 pupils with 5 hours of home learning a day. We will be tracking pupils' engagement in the tasks set and Year Teams will be in contact with pupils who are not engaging to ensure there is support in place so that they are not missing out and therefore disadvantaged on their return to school.

We will support pupils the best we can to help them access learning from home, including providing Chromebooks and dongles for those without them. However, if a pupil fails to engage with online lessons, they may be asked to start attending school in order to complete their work.

Pupil and Parent Support

We understand that learning remotely and not having face to face contact with the school can be challenging, so from Monday 11th January we will be offering the following support:

Live Subject Support: we will be offering a weekly subject drop in session for students who have questions about particular aspects of their subject work.

Live Year Team and Tutor Sessions: We also recognise the vital role of pastoral care during these difficult times. Therefore we will be implementing live sessions 4 times a week led by Tutors and Year Team staff which will promote well-being and provide vital support for students.

Parental Support and communication: This will be an opportunity for parents who have any questions regarding the remote learning or accessing work to drop in and speak with a member of the Year Team.

The information and timings for different year groups can be found on specific year group letters on our website. Please click on the following links for the relevant year group letter:



Main Home Learning Page:

<https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/parents-carers/learning-from-home>

Year 7 Home Learning Page:

<https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/parents-carers/learning-from-home/year-7-home-learning/>

Year 8 Home Learning Page:

<https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/parents-carers/learning-from-home/year-8-home-learning/>

Year 9 Home Learning Page:

<https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/parents-carers/learning-from-home/year-9-home-learning/>

Year 10 Home Learning Page:

<https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/parents-carers/learning-from-home/year-10-home-learning/>

Year 11 Home Learning Page:

<https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/parents-carers/learning-from-home/year-11-home-learning/>

Sixth Form Home Learning Page:

<https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/parents-carers/learning-from-home/sixth-form/>

Engagement and Guardians

We will be routinely monitoring engagement data using results of the Google Form quizzes that are assigned to each lesson. This will enable us to better support pupils where most needed – in terms of both engagement and quality of work. As a 'Guardian', you can access email summaries about your child's activity in Google Classroom. In email summaries, you can review upcoming work, as well as view any missing work your child has not submitted. For this to happen you must accept the invite that will be emailed to you on Monday.

Access to Devices and Data

We are aware that some pupils do not have access to devices or the internet. If you require support with this, please get in contact with your Year Team who can arrange for you to be provided with Chromebooks and internet access via dongles.

Newsletter

Although we have been communicating information to the relevant year groups as and when changes have occurred, I thought it would be useful to summarise the developments in a newsletter so that all parents are fully informed and are aware of the current situation, both in terms of the decisions made by Government and the support packages that we have put in place for pupils.



I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank our pupils. They have adapted quickly to the change in circumstances and the vast majority are already embracing the home learning lessons that are being posed on Google Classroom. I hope that pupils find this method of learning easier this time around, now that they are more accustomed to working in this manner and are familiar with the online platform.

It is also important to appreciate the wonderful job that you, as parents and carers, have done in supporting your children this week, particularly when many of you are working from home, supporting vulnerable relatives, or caring for younger children. Again, if you have any questions or require any support, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Partial Closure

The school is currently only open to the children of critical workers and those who are deemed vulnerable. Whilst initially, we had hoped to have all pupils back in school by the middle of January, the Government have now made the decision that this will not happen until after the February half term. This will of course be dependent upon the Covid infection rates at the time, but we are very much hoping to see all pupils back at the Academy as soon as possible.

Exams

At the beginning of the week the Government announced that GCSE and A-Level exams will not go ahead this year. Initially there was a lack of clarity over the vocational exams that were scheduled for January, however having received further guidance on Wednesday afternoon, we made the decision to cancel these exams as well. The Department of Education has now indicated teacher assessment will form the basis of examination grades awarded this summer and therefore it is vital that pupils continue to engage in their learning fully to ensure their teachers are able to measure their progress. We will provide further information about the process as soon as it is available.

Communication

Please can we request that if you need to contact the school that you do so by email or through the weekly google drop in session. Staff may not always be in the school building to receive phone calls and therefore these are the best methods of communication. The following email addresses may be of use to you:

Year 7 - FAYear7Team@turnerschool.com

Year 8 - FAYear8Team@turnerschools.com

Year 9 - FAYear9Team@turnerschools.com

Year 10 - FAYear10Team@turnerschools.com

Year 11 - FAYear11Team@turnerschools.com

Sixth Form - Hannah.Turner@turnerschools.com



Attendance - FASecondaryAttendance@turnerschools.com

General Enquiries - FAStudentServices@turnerschools.com

Should you need to contact the school in an emergency, our reception will be open from 8.30am-4.00pm everyday.

Mental Health and Well-Being

Please be aware the school website has an additional section on Mental Health and Wellbeing for both parents and pupils.

<https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/parents-carers/mental-health-well-being/> . Furthermore, the school website has a “worry button” for our pupils to access should they need help from the Safeguarding Team <https://www.folkestoneacademy.com/contact/worry-button/>.

Mass Testing

Our testing facility is nearly up and running and we plan to start testing staff and those pupils who are currently attending school next week. We will be in touch with parents shortly in order to gain consent for this to take place.

As always, in this ever-changing situation, we will keep you updated with regards to any further information, or changes from the government.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'S R Shaw'.

Mr S Shaw
Head of School