



KING EDWARD VI SCHOOL LICHFIELD

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2nd February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is now February and as we draw closer to half term, I am sure that many families will be looking forward to the break. We know that nationally there continue to be announcements about what the future may bring, unfortunately at this point there are still a lot of unanswered questions around the return to school and how grades will be awarded for our year 11 and 13 students in the summer. As soon as we are able to share our approach to any guidance that is given, we will contact you.

We continue to be incredibly proud of our how students have responded to the challenges of learning from home. We would encourage students to check Microsoft Teams and Show My Homework regularly, including checking how teachers are expecting work to be submitted.

Recording of 'live' lessons

The closure of schools in 2021 and subsequent national and local guidance has been different to that that was shared in the spring of 2020. During the initial closure the emphasis was on safeguarding and well-being with learning taking place largely via Show My Homework. As schools have been able to prepare and develop their IT systems, we have been able to develop the use of Microsoft teams to support learning.

There are a number of documents produced by both Ofsted and the Department for Education which share guidance on how this learning should take place.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/remote-education-research/remote-education-research>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whats-working-well-in-remote-education/whats-working-well-in-remote-education>

To replicate our curriculum remotely we do not feel that it is appropriate for all lessons to take place on Teams. There are regular opportunities for students to meet with staff on Teams alongside the flexibility for students and families to manage their working days.

To respond to the use of Microsoft Teams we have updated our Privacy notice which can be found here. We have made the decision that lessons should only be recorded in exceptional circumstances. Although it may be useful to be able to access lessons at an alternative time, this does not allow us to check that students are engaging with work. There will be other occasions when staff will share materials including narrated PowerPoints or video materials which can be accessed at alternative times. It is also possible to use a smart phone to watch lessons on Teams.

We do appreciate that a 'live' lesson is not the same as being in a classroom to support and facilitate learning. Students do need to take regular screen breaks and being in front of a screen for five hours a day would reduce student engagement with learning. We are hopeful that we will be able to be back in school soon.

Children's Mental Health Week – 1st February – 7th February

It is more important than ever that we take care of our mental and physical wellbeing during this period of lockdown. Although the majority of our students are not attending school, we want to remind students (and their families) that our pastoral team is still here to help with any worries or questions.

The link between our physical and mental health is significant and this week our PE team shared an assembly with students which focuses on healthy lifestyles. This can be found in the Assembly Channel on their Year Group Teams and is also signposted through Show My Homework.

Dr Radha Modgil from BBC Radio 1's Life Hacks has shared her top five tips on how to stay mentally and emotionally well during the coronavirus lockdown. Sticking to a routine, making sure we take care of ourselves, and using our creativity in new ways are all ways she suggests we can ease the psychological toll that staying inside can have. You can access a short video below:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/newsbeat-52411394>

In addition there are a number of websites and that provide advice on how to look after wellbeing. These can be accessed via the links below:

<https://www.camhs-resources.co.uk/websites>

www.nhs.uk/oneyou

www.annafreud.org/coronavirus-support

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus

Thank you for your support and understanding.

C Forster . L.J. Hurn .

Kind regards, Catharine Forster and Laura Hurn

Deputy Headteachers