

Virtual Learning Curriculum update

We are in our third phase of the virtual learning curriculum, and I wanted to explain some of the adjustments that we have made in more detail.

As it became clear that this phase has no defined end date, we needed to ensure that the delivery of the curriculum is sustainable for students, parents and teachers for the medium term. The two weeks before Easter were a sprint (where we learned a lot!), we are now in a longer distance event. As Mr Gray has already observed, it isn't possible nor desirable to fully recreate school at home.

The following were considered:

- Feedback from parents that some younger students were finding it too much and to go from lesson to lesson for 5 hours per day was stressful, meaning that work was often being done after normal school hours or students felt under pressure to complete during lesson time
- The desire to undertake activities such as exercise or creative pursuits as a family which a fully structured timetable hindered
- The emergent research evidence suggesting that a maximum of 2-3 hours a day of remote learning was optimal for younger students
- Feedback from students that they wanted a mix of 'live' lessons and those where work had been set which they could undertake at a time and pace under that was under their control.
- Teaching staff are finding that preparing a remote lesson is typically taking two to three times longer than a normal classroom lesson. Plans and resources need to be rewritten and experimentation with new technologies and modes of delivery takes time. Many of our teachers also have young children at home, so workload and wellbeing of staff has to be a consideration

In Key Stage 3, we have asked Core subjects (English, Maths, Science, Languages) that have multiple lessons per week to reduce their frequency (e.g. y7 and 8 science are now 2 out of 3 weekly lessons and maths is around 1 lesson per fortnight fewer) and for other faculties to consider project-based work that may stretch across multiple lessons. Year 10 and 12 should continue with an almost complete timetable. Teachers will make it clear on Google Classroom what the pattern of delivery is for each class.

For year 11, we will be issuing bridging work and activities for each subject area next week. This will be for students who are proposing to study the subject in sixth form/college and will be useful to get back into good study habits and develop interest at the next level of study. This work is separate from the Summer Work that will be issued at sixth form induction and is compulsory and needs to be brought in at the start of the new term.

For year 13, we will also be issuing bridging work next week, leading University/Further Education, again by subject, to prepare students for study at the next level. We will also include more general resources on life skills and preparing for the next phase of life.

If parents find their children have ‘run out of work to do’, the following resources are recommended for their quality. It may also be worth double-checking with your child – there have been a few claims of ‘I have nothing to do’ that haven’t been entirely truthful when investigated!

| Resource | Description | Link |
|---|---|---|
| Sandringham Super curriculum | A diverse set of enriching activities and resources for each subject covering Key Stage 3-5 | https://www.sandringham.herts.sch.uk/student-experience/curriculum/super-curriculum/ |
| Seneca Learning | A free learning platform covering a wide range of subjects that also encourages rapid learning and recall via built-in assessment | https://bit.ly/sand_seneca |
| BBC Bitesize | Daily lessons for years 7-10 covering a range of subjects | https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/dailylessons |
| Oak National Academy | Covering years 7-10 across a range of subjects, supported by the DfE | https://www.thenational.academy/ |
| DfE collection of home learning resources | A variety of resources and platforms collected by the Department for Education | https://bit.ly/DfE_Online |