



BEDFORD
FREE SCHOOL

www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

20th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Remote Learning Arrangements for Year 11

I hope you are well and that you were able to have a restful time over the Easter period.

At the end of last term, Ofqual, the government department which has responsibility for exams and qualifications, issued further guidance about how GCSE grades will be awarded this year. Schools will be asked to award a grade based on a holistic assessment of pupils' work across the whole of their GCSE courses. These school grades will then be processed by Ofqual using different statistical means to produce a final GCSE grade. These will be published on Thursday 20th August 2020.

In the meantime, we will not be able to comment on the grades we award to pupils and nor will individual teachers.

Because the summer exams are not going ahead and we have more clarity about how grades will be awarded, we feel now is the right time to begin to set work which will help our pupils prepare for the next stage of their education.

Beginning next week, our teachers will set tasks on Show My Homework which will help to bridge the gap between GCSEs and post-16 study, guiding pupils towards work which is challenging, interesting and prepares them in some way for their courses.

You will be aware of the fact that, while we offer a broad curriculum at BFS, the range of subjects we offer is much narrower than those that our pupils will be going on to study at their different sixth forms and colleges. We will therefore focus on setting work which bridges the gap between the GCSE subjects we offer and the corresponding A level and college courses.

Individual post-16 providers will be working on their own arrangements for preparing pupils for their new courses. At some point they are likely to provide induction material of their own, designed by their own teachers. We will pass on any information as and when we have it. Otherwise, they are likely to be in touch with pupils directly.

From Monday 27th April, teachers will set tasks for each of our subjects. They will make them available to every year 11 pupil, so that pupils can select the subjects that are relevant to their own post-16 courses. These are likely to be fairly open-ended tasks,

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directing pupils to read and make notes. Our teachers are unlikely to ask for this to be submitted—in keeping with the spirit of post-16 study, we are asking pupils to take more responsibility for working independently—but our teachers will be more than happy to support pupils or discuss the work and A levels more generally. Pupils should contact their teachers via Show My Homework or email.

For post-16 subjects and courses where we are not able to provide work, pupils should be active in doing their own research. They should:

- get as much detail of the course as possible from the provider's website (name of course, exam board etc.)

- look up the course specification online, which will outline the kinds of things they will study

- search for information and make notes about the topics focusing on any compulsory units in the specification

We will also aim to continue to provide some work in English and maths which will be relevant for all pupils. Likewise, we will be asked to complete their GCSE booklets in science to ensure they have finished this core subject.

To enable our teachers to better support year 11 pupils, we will be issuing a destinations survey this week to give us the latest information about the courses and options pupils intend to take. Instructions will be issued on Show My Homework. Pupils will need to know their school Google ID and password to complete the survey. These are the same log-in details they will need to complete the daily online register which we have written to you about previously. Instructions for this, and how to find out log-in details if pupils are unsure, will be uploaded to Show My Homework every morning.

We would ask that all pupils make sure that they are completing the daily online register. This helps us to make sure that they are well and supported while we still have a duty of care towards them.

Finally, this Friday 24th April, year 11 students are being invited to take part in an online tutorial with Mr Wood starting at 10.30 am. This will focus primarily on what it is like to be a sixth form student, how to prepare for it and why it is important for pupils to be thinking about life after sixth form from the very start of their courses. They will also have the opportunity to ask any questions. Further details of how to take part will be made available to pupils on Show My Homework.

It is understandable that pupils and parents will still have lots of questions about the arrangements for the start of post-16 courses in September. Questions about enrolment and entry requirements will be best directed to the post-16 providers themselves, who will no doubt be working on these things at the moment and be in touch when they have the information. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Costin-Webb or another member of staff if there is anything we can do to support.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Wood', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr T Wood
Assistant Principal