



BEDFORD
FREE SCHOOL

www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

3rd April 2020

Dear parents / carers

I want to thank you for your continued support over the past two weeks. We are all learning to adapt to a new way of thinking and working. It's fair to say it will take some time to get used to. I want to praise pupils for their continued hard work and dedication. I've heard many reports from colleagues about pupils producing high-quality work and to living up to our school values by continuing to 'go the extra mile' in their studies. We are truly appreciative of the efforts that families are making in these challenging times to support their children and their learning at home. As a school we continue to refine our procedures and methods for delivering the best education we can in these very difficult circumstances.

As you are aware the primary way we are communicating instructions about remote learning to pupils and parents is through **Show My Homework (SMHW)** and it is important that pupils continue to log in each day to review and complete the work being set by their teachers. We recently contacted all students who have not logged on recently to give them a new PIN. If your child is still unable to log on to Show My Homework using their own username and password, please contact Mrs Logan on 01234 332290 or 07594 249851.

In some subjects, teachers have asked pupils to access other websites and applications, such as Google Classrooms, Quizlet, SAM Learning and Hegarty Maths. Instructions for accessing these websites should always be explained clearly on SMHW. If pupils need assistance in completing work, please contact the subject teacher directly by email or by posting a message directly in SMHW. The email addresses of staff are first initial followed by surname@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk. For example, Chris Smith would be csmith@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk.

Following some feedback from parents and pupils, we have made some minor adjustments to pupils' timetables and this is reflected in the updated remote learning plan attached. Please do stay in touch with us to let us know how you are getting on. We want to hear the voices of you and your child to help us get this right moving forward.

A reminder that during the Easter holidays, while some colleagues may issue some homework, we will be suspending our timetable of schoolwork in order to give all pupils and staff a break.

We've made a dedicated page on our website: <https://www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk/covid-19/> which outlines important contact details, information about remote learning, as well as support and advice for pupils and parents. It will also enable you to easily find any letters and information previously sent home.

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R E S P E C T • H O N E S T Y • H I G H E X P E C T A T I O N S

Morning Registration Online

In order to improve our provision and to ensure that we are in touch with the whole family, we would like pupils to complete a simple online registration process before 9:30am each week day. This will start after the Easter holiday on **Monday 20th April**. The instructions for this are as follows.

Pupils should:

1. Log in to Show My Homework in the morning as usual
2. Click the link that will be provided each day. This will take them to a webpage where full instructions for completing the register will be provided as a daily reminder.
3. Before pupils complete the registration process they must ensure that they are logged into their school Google account using their school email address that takes the form:

[userid@student.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk](mailto:user@student.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk)

(Pupils will already be aware of the user ID they will need to use. It is the same username and password they use to login to computers in school and will have used in computing lessons. If pupils are unsure or do not know their school login details then please contact Mrs Logan during normal school hours on 01234 332290 or 07594 249851 for further assistance)

4. Click the 'Register Now' button
5. Complete the form and submit the register

Why?

Registering online in this way helps pupils to maintain a productive morning routine, but it will also give them a valuable way of communicating with the school. When registering, pupils will be able to raise any concerns, let the school know if they or anyone in their family is unwell and request for someone at school to contact them. In short, it will help us to look after them more effectively.

Year 11 and GCSE exams:

Today Ofqual (the exams regulator) have issued further guidance to schools, parents and pupils in Y11 about how grades will be awarded following the cancellation of this year's GCSE exams. This can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcses-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020>. A letter from Ofqual addressed to pupils is also attached. We will of course study the guidance carefully before providing the necessary information to the exam boards in due course.

As anticipated, schools will be asked to give a centre assessment grade which represents the most likely grade a pupil would have achieved in each subject if they had sat their exams this summer and completed any non-exam assessment in subjects like Art, Music, PE and Drama. This will be a holistic professional judgement, balancing the different sources of evidence available. Importantly, this will not be limited to mock exams results alone but rather it will also include classwork, homework, assessments and any other relevant information related to each pupil's performance over the course of study from the beginning of Y10.

To make sure that grades are as fair as possible across schools and colleges, exam boards will put all centre assessment grades through a process of standardisation. Exam boards will make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair and that students are not advantaged or disadvantaged because their schools or colleges are more generous or harsh than others. This means the final grade pupils get could be different from the one we send to the exam board. Schools and colleges have been told that they must not share their centre assessment grades with pupils, parents or carers, under any circumstances, until after final results are issued.

Ofqual are focusing on making sure pupils are not disadvantaged by these unprecedented circumstances, including allowing for an appeal where appropriate. Pupils who feel that their grades from the summer do not reflect their ability will have the opportunity to take to sit exams at the earliest reasonable opportunity in the new academic year. If they choose to do this Ofqual have confirmed that both grades will stand.

I hope this information will be reassuring to both pupils and parents.

Should your family have any question or need any support, contact details and other information are available on the BFS website.

I hope you and your family have a restful Easter.

Keep safe and stay well.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T Blake', written in a cursive style.

Tim Blake
Principal