



1st April 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

Response to Initial Feedback on Home Learning

Last week, I sent a survey out to teachers, parents and students asking for their feedback on *Home Learning* so far. Thank you to all those who responded and to the additional emails received from individuals, thanking the Collegiate for our work in these difficult circumstances. I thought it would be helpful to share some of the feedback received and answer some of the questions that parents and students raised.

What is going well with Home Learning? (Parents)

- The scheduling allows students to organise their time and have a 'normal' school day
- Allows parents to work from home as students are able to access tasks independently
- Like the teacher tutorials as it is reassuring to hear the voice of the teacher
- Telephone contact from the Form Tutor is really comforting
- Lessons are clear and teachers are often available to answer individual questions
- Great variety of tasks set from creative to research tasks
- My child's day is shorter as the travel time is removed
- You can plan ahead which helps you to meet childcare needs
- More family time
- "Riddlesdown makes me feel so grateful to be a parent at a school that cares so much."

What is going well with Home Learning? (Students)

- It feels like a normal school day because of the timetabled lessons
- Helps to fill the time and learn new things throughout the day
- I can approach lessons at my own pace
- You can eat and work more comfortably and have less peer pressure with work
- You can pace yourself at your own speed and consolidate any gaps in learning
- You can take breaks when you want to and listen to music
- You can get up later as there is no travel
- Independence from teachers which means more time to research
- My day is calmer as I'm not rushing to get to school so I'm less stressed
- I can talk to friends to help me with tasks

What could be better?

- *Could all lessons be filmed?* A number of teachers are pre-recording lesson tutorials on the visualiser or on Youtube. Whilst it is not feasible for this to happen every lesson, we will encourage teachers to do this where possible as it is supportive to hear the teacher's voice and verbal instruction.
- *Could we use Zoom/live lessons/live Tutor time to engage with students more?* Unfortunately, not. There are a number of safeguarding risks that cannot be regulated when working remotely and we also need to be mindful that a number of staff are looking after their own children at home, so the 'live' facility would be very difficult to manage at a time when we are all having to work flexibly. We would encourage students to a) post curriculum questions on the stream so that their peers can answer them or b) list problems on the stream and the teacher will answer them before the next lesson or used the problems raised to guide the lesson content or revise the sequence of learning.

- *Can we go back to Show My Homework?* I know that we will have demonstrated through these unprecedented times that *Google Classroom* is an excellent platform for *Home Learning* as it allows students to have work scheduled, submit work and get feedback from their teacher and get feedback from their peers. This functionality was not possible with *Show My Homework* and I know that the platform has repeatedly crashed with schools that are still using it.
- *Some teachers are setting too much work and it is making my child anxious.* In the first week of *Home Learning*, teachers wanted to make sure that students would have enough work to complete – better to have too much than too little. We will remind teachers that additional work should be labelled as such so that students do not feel overwhelmed. In addition, teachers are now building their own experience and confidence in this different way of working, so will be better placed to provide stretch, challenge and support, as necessary.
- *Some children have struggled to have access to a computer as we only have one in the house and a couple of children.* We appreciate that this poses a challenge for some families. After Easter, we will encourage teachers to post all scheduled lessons for the day in the morning so that students have the ability to work in a more flexible way, whilst still following their timetabled lessons.
- *I am worried about the amount of screen time that my children are having.* Although tasks are set online, not all tasks require the computer to be completed. Students should be encouraged to come away from the screen whenever possible. Teachers will continue to set a variety of work, not all of which requires computer use. All students have exercise books and they can submit work to *Google Classroom* from an exercise book by taking a photo and uploading it for feedback.
- *How will be gaps in knowledge be addressed as students go into the next year group?* Directors of Learning will be spending time focusing on how we rebuild and restore the curriculum in this uncertain time. Schemes of work will be readdressed for September and will take into account the *Home Learning* that students have been doing independently.
- *What do I do if my son/daughter refuses to work?!* We recognise that this can be challenging for parents. Please reiterate to the students that completing work set is vital for their progress moving forward. If necessary, please speak to the Form Tutor who will try to provide some encouragement.
- *Will Home Learning packs be extended?*
We are in the process of producing new *Home Learning* packs and will distribute these after Easter for those students that require them.

We will, similarly, share feedback from teachers with all teachers and use all of these comments to improve our approaches after Easter. At the same time, we shall determine how feedback and assessment (including internal exams) can work most effectively and let you know next term.

I hope that this response to feedback has been helpful. *Home Learning* will resume on 20th April 2020.

Yours sincerely



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Assistant Principal Teaching and Learning