



ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE



02 April 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Students

As we come to the end of the second week of lockdown, I hope that you are all keeping well and safe during these difficult times.

I would like to thank the staff who have been coming into school to support students and keep the back office working during these last two weeks and also all the staff who have been getting used to setting and reviewing work from home. I would also like to thank parents for supporting your children in getting this work done. I know it is not easy!

As we move into our traditional Easter holiday, we are looking ahead towards a more extended period of lockdown and self-isolation. Teachers will not be setting work for students to complete over the Easter holiday as we believe students do need a 'brain break' during this time. Post Easter, as a college we are looking to ways of streamlining how work is set and better ways to track how successful our students are at completing the work.

In order to give you some structure to how your sons and daughters could structure their days we are providing some model KS3, KS4 and KS5 daily timetables. We strongly advise students to use these. From the 20th of April 2020 all work will be set on Show My Homework (SMHW) on a weekly basis. Work will be available to students on a Monday from 08.15am and all work set that week will have a deadline for completion of Friday of that week at 12.45pm for Key Stage 3 and 4 students and 1.00pm for Key Stage 5 students.

Below are the colleges expectations in terms of the work students should be completing each week.

Key Stage 3 Students

Maths, English and Science will set work that will take 3 hours to complete per week. Other subjects will set work that will take 1 hour to complete per week. The only exception to this is PE who will be providing an exercise session each morning for students to follow.

Key Stage 4 Students

We do realise that particularly for Year 11 students this is a very difficult time. As yet, the Government has not published how exams will be assessed. It is important that Year 11 try to keep up with the work set as some students may wish to take exams later in the Autumn term and will need to be prepared for these.

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For Key Stage 4 students work will follow the current scheme of learning for the examination subject your son is following. It may include revision tasks or possibly test work for Year 11.

Maths, English and Science will set work that will take 4 hours to complete per week. Option subjects and RE will set work that will take 2 hours to complete per week.

Key Stage 5 Students

Again, like Year 11 for Year 13 students we are still not clear as to how examination grades will be awarded. We advise students to keep following the work set by their teachers.

For Key Stage 5 students each subject will set work that will take students 4 hours 30 minutes to complete per week, however those on triple vocational programmes will be expected to complete more than this.

We hope that this clarity helps you all in what is a very difficult time for us all.

Please do remain in contact with the school as needed. If your child is unwell or there are other factors that mean your child is not able to complete the work set do let your child's Tutor or Head of Year know.

God Bless and follow the Government advice to stay safe.

With best wishes,

Mr Garrido

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Please find below resources that will help your child structure their day over the coming weeks.

We understand that for many families, juggling work, childcare and now facilitating education is going to be enormously challenging. On top of this, we know that you may well be supporting sick or vulnerable relatives and friends, while many are also endeavouring to manage financial or other concerns. But through all this, we want to encourage and support you to do all you can to help your child sustain their education to the best of your and their ability: routine and a sense of purpose are going to be incredibly important over the coming weeks and months. Perhaps the key thing at a time of uncertainty like this is to focus on *'controlling the controllables'* – focus on the things you can do rather than on the things you can't.

We are all in this together and we must be realistic about that. Family comes first for everyone, and that includes our staff. We would ask that you are considerate of that when you look at the guidance provided here: staff are clear about what is reasonable in terms of our expectations of students and families, and we ask that you are reasonable in your expectations of the staff.

With that in mind, please be aware that:

- With the best will in the world, we cannot provide a school away from school.
- It is very difficult to effectively teach new content remotely. For this reason and others, much of the work your son will be set will consist of enriching their prior learning, strengthening and deepening their prior learning, or developing the fluency with which they use their prior learning.

We hope that the information and guidance on these pages will help you understand the resources being provided for your child and enable you to support them as best you possibly can. More than that, we hope that what we are offering here can support your family more generally with finding a rhythm to your days during what is likely to be an extended period of school closure.

Why should we keep up a 'school-like' routine at home?

Keeping a daily routine, maintaining some form of **exercise**, and making time for **reading** all have significant benefits to mental health and well-being. We would strongly encourage you to set up and stick to a daily schedule, and where possible, work alongside your child. For example, if you are working from home then set up a desk where you can both work independently but together. The sooner you do this, the better.

Below you will find our proposed timetables for KS3, KS4 and KS5 students. We encourage you to print these out, agree it with your child, and endeavour to stick to it!

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How will work be set for my child?

Work will be set by subject teams using Show My Homework. Work will be set weekly and will remain 'open' from the Monday to Friday of each week. All work must be submitted in the specified format by the stated times on a Friday.

If you need assistance with your own login to SMHW in order to support your child directly with this, please use the **CONTACT US** link on the College website.

What if school is closed for a very long period of time?

We firmly believe it is important that all students are supported and encouraged to keep up their studies but appreciate that this will become increasingly challenging the longer the period out of school is. The best way to maintain it in the medium to long term is to introduce a daily schedule from day one so that this becomes your family's 'new normal'.

We are continually reviewing the situation and will provide updates for parents and students as and when the guidance we are being given by the government changes.

My child was due to sit GCSE or A-Level exams this summer, what is going to happen?

The truth is at the moment we still don't know any more than you. The PM said that "exams in May and June are cancelled" and that "their progress will not be impeded because of this". This doesn't mean that they won't ever have to sit exams to be awarded their qualifications. For this reason, we feel it is important that all students due to sit exam this summer should be continuing to prepare for them – see this as an opportunity to do even better. We will keep all students and parents updated of any changes to that situation.

Details released on the 20th March suggest that NEAs and coursework will be taken into consideration, so where students are undertaking work on these at the moment, they should continue to do so.

How can I motivate my child?

The truth is, it is going to be difficult! The longer the school closure goes on and the more 'locked-down' society becomes, the harder it is going to get. But, as this happens, it will become increasingly important for them to focus and engage with their learning on a daily basis.

Try to find ways of rewarding them –for younger ones a sticker or star chart leading to a larger reward on a Saturday. Or X minutes of time on their Xbox/TV for 1 hour chunk of time working. Try to maintain an emphasis on celebrating, rewarding and telling them how proud you are of them, rather than simply punishing or criticising.

Encourage them to work collaboratively, online with their friends so that they can keep up as many peer interactions as they can.

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I am incredibly proud of my child, they have really risen to the challenge, what can I do?

Let us know! We want to hear about all the positives so that we can share them amongst our community on these pages and on social media – this is an excellent way of motivating each other. Encourage them to contact their subject teacher, Form Tutor or Head of Year with a copy of the work or a photo of themselves with the work with a short description if appropriate.

My child has special educational needs, how will they be supported?

Each of Learning Support Assistants have been allocated a number of students to try and support over the coming weeks and months – they will endeavour to maintain contact with your son to offer support and guidance.

However, as I am sure you will appreciate, it is not easy to support the students remotely and at times, due to personal circumstances, they may not be available to do this. Therefore, we would appreciate it if you or another adult / older sibling provided additional guidance and support so that they can access the work.

What should my child do during the personal project time on his Remote Learning Timetable?

All children have different interests and it is important to harness and nurture these. Talk to them and encourage them to find something they are passionate about, then help set them up on an ongoing Personal Interest Project.

Please do encourage them to share their projects with us! We would love to be able to continue celebrating and sharing great work.

Some ideas for these projects are below:

- Keep a daily diary/ quarantine journal (in a particular writing style? In another language? Or maybe just as a way to write down how you are feeling and to process what is going on around you)
- Learn a new language using a free online course
- Do a [virtual museum tour](#) and write a review
- Start a factual project, researching and presenting information on absolutely anything (historical figures, objects in space, exotic animals, the history of your favourite sports team...)
- Start a blog about life during school closure or about
- Create a stop-motion animation
- Create a podcast or news show. Interview the family!
- Write a computer programme

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What should my child read during the reading time on their Remote Learning Timetable? Here are some suggestions:

Online texts:

Non Fiction texts: <https://readon.myon.co.uk/library/browse.html>

Classical texts for free: <http://read.gov/books/>

Free Library e books, audio books and magazines: <https://rbdigital.com/> (you need to have a library card and number).

A daily dose of David Walliams: <https://www.worldofdavidwalliams.com/elevenses/>

Roald Dahl short stories: <https://www.roalddahlfans.com/dahls-work/short-stories/>

Edgar Allan Poe short stories: <https://poestories.com/stories.php>

Poems: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems>

Short stories by O Henry: <https://ucaecemdp.edu.ar/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Short-stories-from-100-Selected-Stories.pdf>

Short stories by Oscar Wilde: <https://www.wilde-online.info/short-stories.htm>

Creative writing task a day:

Literacy based tasks a day: <http://www.pobble365.com/>

Literacy and Grammar texts: <https://www.literacywagoll.com/>

Audio and visual:

Free audio books from Audible: <https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

Free audiobooks: <https://www.worldbookday.com/world-of-stories/>

Author and illustrator masterclasses: <https://www.worldbookday.com/online-masterclasses/>

Newspapers and magazines:

The Week: <https://www.theweek.co.uk/>

New Statesman: <https://www.newstatesman.com/uk>

All About Space Magazine: <https://www.space.com/>

New Scientist: <https://www.newscientist.com/>

History Today: <https://www.historytoday.com/>

National Geographic: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/>

Business Insider: <https://www.businessinsider.com/international?r=US&IR=T>

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