

St Augustine's RC High School

Newsletter
14th January 2021

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Remote Learning Newsletter

Dear families,

We have been very pleased with the attendance and engagement of pupils in their remote learning since the start of term, with over 2,000 reward points issued for excellent work last week. Our thanks to families and pupils for all of your efforts as you adapt once again to remote education. We have also learned a few things ourselves and would like to share some of that with you in this update.

I emailed pupils last week with some rules for remote learning. I have listed these below so that you can ensure that they are aware of our expectations. Where a pupil fails to abide by these rules they may be removed from individual lessons or from all lessons for a period of time. In this situation pupils will be directed to online learning via Oak Academy. Teachers are able to remove the Chat functions and can silence individual pupils where this is felt to be a more appropriate solution.

Do use the chat function for classwork related issues only – this will mostly be questions to the teacher. If it is mis-used there is a chance that the teacher might miss an important question from a pupil and can cause a distraction for the rest of the class.

Do not post gifs, memes or other images into the chat.

Do make sure you are wearing headphones at home. This protects the privacy of all the class and means you are not disturbing others in your house. It also reduces feedback / echo when people speak.

Do follow your teacher's instructions with regard to cameras and microphones immediately. You should be suitably dressed in case cameras are required to be on.

Do make sure you are on time for your lessons. Arriving late means that you might miss important instructions and makes it more difficult for the teacher to register you – possibly leading to a call home about non-attendance.

Do not make any recording of the lesson or take any screenshots / photographs of the lesson. In doing so you are in breach of our Remote Learning policy and this may lead to serious consequences. This applies to anyone in your household.

Do make sure that work you are set is posted online or completed in the appropriate book - your teachers will want to see this when you return to school.

Do email your teacher if you are having difficulty logging on or accessing your Team. Also check your own emails on a regular basis.

Do make sure that your behaviour online is at least as good as we would expect in school. **Do** respect everyone's right to learn and treat everyone with kindness.

If you do not follow the school policy on these matters you will be given sanctions and may be removed from online lessons, relying on other resources to keep up to date.

Attendance Issues

Pupil Absence

We are contacting families when pupils do not attend lessons. We do understand that sometimes IT access is difficult and appreciate that sometimes it is not the fault of the pupil if they are unable to attend. When we do contact you about non-attendance this is not meant as a criticism, but rather to support families with access issues (and possibly the occasional reluctant pupil!). We also accept that online registers are not as easy for teachers to manage as those taken in class so there may be occasions where an absence is reported when a pupil did attend the class, e.g. a dropped the connection when attendance was checked. We trust that families will check that pupils are doing their best to attend and engage. Please do not feel you need to reply if you are satisfied that your child has attended / tried to attend.

If your child is not well enough to attend online classes please let us know in the usual way, either by phoning school or by reporting via email to attendance@sarchs.com.

Staff Absence

Unfortunately, there will be times when teachers are unable to be present for a scheduled lesson. Where this is known in advance the teacher will set work via an assignment and will email the class so that they are not left in the "Teams lobby" with nobody to let them in. It is therefore advisable that **pupils check emails at least daily** to see if there are any announcements about changes to lesson schedules.

With an unforeseen teacher absence, the pupils may receive an email from the Curriculum Leader directing them to an online lesson (such as Oak Academy) until such time as other work can be set.

Online Access

We have been able to provide laptops and other equipment to pupils who are struggling to access remote learning. While mobile phones can provide reasonable access to Teams sessions, we do not recommend their use for completing assignments and other online activities. Xbox1 and Playstation consoles can also be used to access Teams, although have similar limitations to mobile phones for competing school work. Laptops and tablets provide a much better tool for remote learning. If you are struggling with poor internet connectivity please contact school on info@sarchs.com or phone 01254 823362. We may be able to provide a mobile data SIM card so that a laptop or tablet can be "hot spotted" to access the internet.

Lesson Format

For most classes, the class will be registered at the start of the scheduled lesson time. Pupils will then be given instructions by their teacher on what the rest of the lesson entails. The latest evidence from Ofsted suggests that a range of activities is preferable to a single approach and pupils might expect a mixture of online instruction by their teacher, online activities (such as quizzes or videos) and offline activities such as working in a book or reading. We would certainly not recommend extended periods of screen time and have reduced the lesson duration to 45-50 minutes to allow a reasonable break between sessions.

20-20-20 Vision

Recent guidance about screen time suggests that those working in front of a screen should look at an item more than 20 feet (6 metres) away, for 20 seconds, at least every 20 minutes. This reduces the strain on the muscles in the eyes. Please encourage regular breaks from screens at home.

Parents Evenings

We are reviewing the timing of Parents' Evenings this year and will publish an updated calendar in due course. We intend to use School Cloud, an online video conferencing service, for online appointments with your child's teachers which can be accessed via mobile phone or laptop.

Free School Meals

Vouchers have been purchased by school and issued via text message for families eligible for Free School Meals. Initially these have all been ordered for Tesco but if you wish to change to a closer store please contact school.

Support for Mental Health and Wellbeing (requested publicity)

With the latest lockdown and schools closures, young people may really benefit from some additional support with their mental health. Kooth can offer that support to young people in Lancashire (only) aged 10-16. Parents and carers can register a place to attend with these updated links.

[Thursday 21 January at 11am-12pm](#)

[Wednesday 27 January at 6-7pm](#)

Come and Explore Kooth with us

If you are a parent/carer, and are concerned about the emotional wellbeing of your child and they are aged between the age of 11-18, (up to 25 for SEND)

The coronavirus pandemic is having a detrimental impact on the emotional wellbeing of children and young people. Kooth.com is a free service that is commissioned in over 90% of England.

The session will be an online zoom event. You will be provided with:

- A live demonstration of the service
- A Q&A to ask us anything you want to know about Kooth

Please join us on Thursday 21st of January 2021 6.00-7.00pm

Please sign up on Eventbrite for free:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/blackburn-with-darwen-parent-drop-in-tickets-135878503261>

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