

Home Schooling

I hope everyone is keeping safe and well during these challenging times. Over the last two weeks I have been having to work at home and self-isolate with my family. During this time, I have been battling with getting the balance right between working and home schooling. The biggest problem was trying to decide what was the right amount of time they should be spending on the work set by their school and downtime.

The important thing to recognise here is that everyone is different and there is no magical solution. Key is to find a routine that works best for you (the parents) and the family. For some following the normal school day timetable works but for others it does not. My advice would be to sit down with your children and plan their home timetable with them, for some this could be for the whole week, for others you may need to do this on a daily basis to discuss tweaks to what has happened during the day. This is wholly appropriate as we are all working in new situations which will take time to adapt to and will need to be refined.

We have received several emails referring to some of the problems you have been experiencing over the last week. These include: -

1. Problems accessing online material
2. Not having enough ICT hardware in the home to access the material
3. Children becoming anxious because they are unable to complete all the work set
4. Not having enough work to keep students busy

This is not an exhaustive list but covers the main points raised and I will try to cover them to give you the best advice possible.

1. All students should be accessing the work via Office 365. Please refer to the link for advice and guidance to help trouble shoot your difficulties.

<https://www.hamptongardens.org.uk/online-learning-and-support/it-support-and-guides/>

2. This is especially a problem in households where parents are now working from home and there may be more than one child that needs to access the ICT equipment to complete their work. This is where individual time slots are useful, they don't need to be an hour long, you may choose to allocate 30 min slots depending on circumstances. Remember learning does not have to follow the strict school timetable. It is worth keeping in mind that some learning, such as the Maths work can be completed on handheld devices just as easily as a PC or laptop.

3. During this time of uncertainty, it is important to maintain your children's education, but it is equally important that we preserve each other's mental wellbeing. I am very grateful and impressed with the way that staff have been able to produce work for students to complete remotely from the school environment in such a short space of time. I have been equally impressed with the students' response to this and the way in which they are completing the work set. However, there will be students who are coping with this new way of working and there will be those who are finding hard to adjust as well. All we ask is that the students try their very best to complete the work set within the time frames that you as a household have agreed that they spend on their learning for each subject. Teachers are regularly checking One Note to monitor how students are getting on and where it appears, they need further support or guidance will be communicating with them on their Class Notebook or via email. We encourage students to email their teachers from their school email account should they need specific support.
4. For those that manage to complete the work set and are looking for more to do, we are suggesting additional websites resources that you can access to continue your learning independently. A selection are included below but we will post more via our social media accounts as we see more.

We are all trying to adapt to this new way of working and managing our leisure time. Over the last two weeks I have discovered that this is an opportunity to reconnect with my family and to do things that we found ourselves doing less and less due to the hectic lifestyles we normally lead.

Some of the positives that have come out of this time include regular family mealtimes where we now all have the time to sit around the table to talk (important to switch phones and TV off), dusted off those board games boxes, I had forgotten how long Monopoly really took to play when played properly.

We know that we are going to be faced with this way of working for a period of time but it is important that we do follow the guidelines set in place so that we can return to the normal way of working as quickly as possible.

- Encourage your children to exercise as much as they can, in the garden, following online gym classes, in the garage.
- Encourage them to read as much as possible, make use of Amazon providing free books.
- Encourage them to take up a new interest, learn something new.
- Encourage them to cook more.

Please take care of yourselves and adhere to the advice and guidance of the Government.

Mr A Greenwood
Head of School

Resources to support Home Learning for parents

https://www.roalddahl.com/things-to-do-indoors	Free resources and activities, including books being read, for all things Roal Dahl
https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/keystage3-ks3/keystage3-ks3-festivals-and-events/keystage3-ks3-festivals-and-events-easter?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=newsletter_2020-03-29_GB-ENG_KS3KS4	Lots of free Easter Activities covering lots of different subject areas
https://thebrilliantclub.org/the-brilliant-club-for-pupils/info-for-pupils/	Resources for 10-18 year olds based around Higher Education
https://www.tate.org.uk/kids	Lots of activities and quizzes based around Art
https://stories.audible.com/discovery	Free Audible stories for all age groups
https://schools.firstnews.co.uk/remote-learning-resources/	Free 6 week trial of First News, a newspaper designed for young people. Includes activities based around the newspaper too
http://www.homemade-preschool.com/the-starry-night-vincent-van-gogh.html	Lots of colour by numbers activities-including famous works of art!
https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize	New 'learning at home' section being produced. Lots of 'old' stuff very useful too until that is online
https://www.khanacademy.org/signup?isparent=1	Free online learning for a wide range of subjects
https://pages.sumdog.com/home-learning-during-school-closures/	Free maths and grammar skills and games
https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/self-care/	Lots of ideas for self care to promote positive wellbeing
https://www.scouts.org.uk/the-great-indoors/	Indoor activities list from the Scouts
https://www.worldbook.com/wbblog/covidsupport	Free access to a wide range of ebooks

There are even more available here:

<https://www.tes.com/news/coronavirus-free-resources-home-learning>