



Magna Academy

Poole

an Aspirations Academy

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12th January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: Remote Learning Update

I am writing to you with further details and clarification of our remote learning provision.

Firstly, I want to assure you that we continuously review our remote learning provision, and have provided clear guidance for our staff to ensure consistency as far as is possible across all subjects within the academy. We also have systems in place for monitoring the quality of provision on our online platform to ensure resources and lessons are of a high standard, to enable students to continue learning their curriculum effectively from home.

‘Live’ Lessons

At Magna our Teaching and Learning framework is based on evidence, research and best practice. This is the same for our remote learning provision. Currently students are able to access work that is in line with their unit scheme of work through Google Classroom, and upload it for their teacher to check and provide feedback. In addition to the work and accompanying instructions and resources, teachers are also creating pre-recorded lessons using Screencastify which allows them to record their screen as they explain the lesson content. Students are able to contact their teacher either via the ‘stream’ or the private comments function for support with this work.

The reason we have chosen this approach is because it allows students to watch the video multiple times - ensuring that they get all the information required - but also at any time, allowing for flexibility across different households. This is particularly important for those who may be unable to participate in live lessons as they may have to share a device. Additionally, during live lessons it is still very difficult for teachers to offer individual help via the computer screen as they often cannot see a student's work. We believe that being able to watch their teachers' explanations multiple times and ask them questions via Google Classroom is more inclusive, flexible and allows our students to be better supported in their home learning. This approach is supported by evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation's (EEF) Rapid Evidence Assessment on Remote Learning. One of the key findings in this report is that teaching quality is more important than how lessons are delivered - there was no clear difference between teaching in real time (synchronous teaching) and alternatives (asynchronous teaching - pre-recorded). This is also highlighted in Ofsted's most recent guidance 'What's working well in remote education' (January 2021).

However, as we learn more about this new way of providing education, we are always considering how to develop it to better meet the needs of our students. We have already trialled live streaming with our sixth form students and we are currently looking at plans to potentially roll this out further in the near future. Our pilot has shown that the primary benefits of live lessons are: facilitating social interaction between students and teachers, and being able to more effectively address misconceptions in students' learning. Although this has been a successful pilot, it is important to recognise that these have been small group seminar-style sessions where students have been able to easily interact with the teacher due to the small numbers.

The use of live lessons has been discussed at length by the Senior Leadership Team and we are aware that some schools are already streaming live lessons. However, it is important to emphasise that our focus is on providing high quality remote learning in any format that is most effective and appropriate, and we will take these decisions based on what is best for our students - for both their progress and wellbeing - and for our staff, only after careful review and consideration.

Monitoring and Feedback

Teachers will provide whole-class feedback to students in line with our academy marking policy - weekly for core subjects and fortnightly for foundation subjects. This will include details of what students are doing well and what they need to do to improve. Each group will also be set a weekly quiz on Google Classroom; this will help us to monitor your child's progress and engagement. Students and teachers may also use the 'stream' on Google Classroom to communicate with each other about the work, as well as the private comments function if they prefer (also available for Hegarty Maths and Tassomai).

Teachers will monitor students' engagement and completion of work at least weekly - in line with the Department for Education guidance - and will make contact with them via Google Classroom if they have any concerns and /or to provide further support. Teachers may also contact parents/carers directly if a student is not engaging in remote learning in their subject. Any concerns are recorded centrally so that Heads of Year and tutors can monitor students and share this information when contact is made with home.

Students who are completing high quality work will be recognised and rewarded by their teachers to help maintain motivation levels at this challenging time.

Assignment Deadlines

Work is set as an assignment on Google Classroom which students have to submit; this enables their teacher to check if it has been completed. Each assignment is given a deadline of the end of the day the lesson is on which students should endeavour to meet; this is to ensure that students space their work out properly during the week rather than potentially leaving it all to the end of the week, and to provide them with more structure. This therefore gives the student some flexibility to choose when to complete the work during the day. We are aware that there will be some students who are unable to complete the work that same day due to their varying circumstances, in which case they should still submit the work after the deadline. No student will be penalised for late submission and the work will still be checked.



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Workpacks/Access to a device

We have been providing paper workpacks for those students without access to Google Classroom, however it is important to highlight that the best provision for students is online, as this is where they have access to the Screencastify videos with quality explanations and where they are able to easily communicate with their teacher. We are working hard to be able to provide all students with adequate access to the internet and a device so that all can access Google Classroom. Once all students are equipped to access online learning, we will therefore no longer be providing workpacks.

We have recently been made aware that students can also access Google Classroom from an Xbox or Playstation. In order to fully access all features, they will also require a USB keyboard which can be purchased cheaply from Amazon.co.uk. Instructions for accessing the Google Classroom using these consoles are attached with this letter.

Peripatetic Music Lessons

We are pleased to inform you that students will be able to continue learning their instruments remotely using Google Meet. This will be done only using Magna Google accounts to ensure it is secure for students. Mrs Giles will be in contact shortly with students this applies to.

Website Support

In addition to the support and guidance already shared with you (letters can be found on the Magna [website](#)), we are also in the process of setting up a Frequently Asked Questions page on our website to offer further help to parents, carers and students. You will receive a message with the link once this has been launched.

Parental Support

We understand that remote learning can also present a challenge for you, and we appreciate all your support during this challenging time.

Our top tips for successful remote learning:

- Try to encourage your child to be ready and dressed for the start of the school day, and to keep to their timetable
- Distinguish between weekdays and weekends, and make it clear when the school day is over, to separate home and school life
- Plan breaks and exercise into the day to help keep your child active
- As far as is possible, take an active role in your child's learning, for example by asking them about their day and what work they have done



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We very much appreciate your feedback and suggestions in order to help us improve, and we thank you for your ongoing support whilst we continue to adapt and learn how to best support our students.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs S Mashike
Vice Principal