



8<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

## Parental Update

And breathe! I am sure we have all found this week to be full of challenges and I hope you have been able to overcome them. A big thank you and well done to the staff, students and parents who have re-established their home classrooms and engaging with home learning.

It is inevitable that not everything will work first time and, especially when working with IT, things will go wrong from time to time, but overall the feedback has been positive. If you are experiencing any issues with any aspect of your child's education, please get in touch.

During Lockdown I will not be providing the usual update on cases, as most people are working from home and we will not be made aware of all cases, which might lead to inaccurate and misleading information.

Today's update is in 3 parts:

- Part A – for those students not in school
- Part B – for those students in school
- Part C – update on our Testing Provision

### Part A – information for students not in school

#### 1. Remote Education

For the next five weeks all work for students will be set through Microsoft TEAMS. The curriculum will be taught through a combination of live lessons, pre-recorded lessons and pre-set work. You will receive a separate email with your child's provision for home education.

Pre-set work and resources to support learning will be stored in the files section of each of the students' subject class TEAMS page. It is very important that all students attend the live lessons as these will be planned to support independent learning throughout the week. Other scheduled lessons on the timetable for each subject will be in the form of pre-recorded lessons or independent study of pre-set work. Whilst we have scheduled them in to allow all students to complete a five-lesson day, we are aware, for a variety of reasons, students may need to complete these sessions outside of the timetable structure.

The government has been clear that, where schools remain open, they are providing a "*safe place for those children, it's not going to be an educational setting*". With that in mind, in order to ensure fairness and parity between students in school and those at home and to reduce the number of staff required

in the building, the students in school will follow the same work as those at home via in-school computers. No teaching will take place within the school.

Students in Year 11 will follow their timetable as normal as this will mostly be through live lessons with their subject teachers, occasionally supplemented with pre-recorded lessons or pre-set work.

## 2. **Access to Computers**

Though most young people now have a suitable device to access their TEAMS lessons and work, I am conscious that some families may need to share devices. If this is the case please contact the school as we may be able to assist through the loan of a computer.

## 3. **Accessing work through X Box or PS4**

I have been made aware that XBoxes and PS4s can not only be used to play FIFA, CoD, Minecraft, Halo and Fortnite (I have two teenage sons) but students can also access their TEAMS sessions through them. This may be very useful in families where they are sharing devices. The following link explains how this can be done.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiNzN8QxIRI>

## 4. **Free School Meals**

All families who are entitled to Free School Meals and whose children are learning from home will soon receive vouchers. We have been assured they should be with us in the next couple of days and we will, of course, get them out to you ASAP. Any family that need urgent food assistance can contact St Helens Together on 01744 676767.

## **Part B – Vulnerable Students or Children of Key Workers**

Our onsite provision for vulnerable students and children of key workers runs from 8.30am to 3.00pm. Students onsite are given access to computers and will join the same lessons and complete the same work as students working from home. The provision is run by our Cover Supervisors and Teaching Assistants.

### 1. **Vulnerable Children**

If your child has been identified as a vulnerable student then we will already have been in touch to ask them to come into school.

### 2. **Key workers**

If you are a key worker already on our list, you should have received an email via Parentmail yesterday asking for confirmation of days required for your child next week. This should be returned by 2:00pm today. If you are a key worker and have not yet registered with us, please contact Mrs Peet at the school to pre-book a place for your child, subject to availability.

### 3. **Bubbles**

Owing to the low numbers in Year 10 and 11, these two groups have been combined into a single bubble. Years 7, 8 and 9 remain as separate Year bubbles.

### 4. **Arrangements for coming into school**

- Students should arrive and depart via the **Alder Hey Road** entrance (unless your child has a pre-arranged reason to use the main reception) from 8:00am onwards.
- Buses will be running as normal.
- Students should go to the following areas when they arrive in school:

<b>Year Group</b>	<b>Location</b>
Year 7	Main Library
Year 8	F9 (computer Room)
Year 9	G3 (on the Year 9 corridor)
Year 10 & 11	Open computer space next to the Year 11 office

5. **What does my child need to bring into school?**

- Students should be in full uniform
- Students should bring their usual equipment (pen, pencil, ruler, calculator and something to write on).
- They should bring with them a set of **wired headphones** (3.5mm jack) to be able to hear their lessons. Please note it needs to be the 'old fashioned' wired earphones that will connect to our computers not airpods or similar.
- Lunch and break service will be on, though more limited. Any children accessing this should ensure they have money on their account (free School meals will be applied as normal).

**Part C – School Testing**

I am pleased to tell you that our testing facility is now up and running. Though we have 23 staff who have been trained, we are working with a core team of 8 staff, being led by Mrs Clague. They are now carrying out daily tests for close contacts and weekly tests for staff and we will be extending this out to those students who are onsite next week (all testing is voluntary and requires consent). A big thank you to all involved for getting this all up and running in a matter of days

I think that is more than enough for now. I hope you and your families manage to have a restful weekend and we look forward to what next week may bring.

Yours sincerely,

**Andrew Rannard**  
Headteacher