



DOWNSEND SCHOOL

Inspiring Young Minds

18 March 2020

Dear Parents

Whilst things have been developing on a national and global level, throughout the school we have been working hard to ensure that we are ready to continue your child's education throughout any periods of closure. We have spent time researching the most suitable online platforms to support this, training our staff teams and preparing work in line with the normal school curriculum. We are now in a position to share with you more information about what this home learning will comprise.

Remote Learning Phase

The first five days of school closure will be referred to as the 'Remote Learning Phase'. During this time, a home learning pack will be provided for Lower School children on their year group page of the VLE, 'Firefly'. This will be accessed with the logon your child already uses for this platform. In the Upper School, work will be assigned as tasks on the VLE and packs will be given out by some departments. This 'Remote Learning Phase' enables teaching staff to finalise their preparation for the next stage as, whilst they have already prepared well, they have still been maintaining their normal, or slightly increased, teaching load, as well as attending training sessions. This work is to be supervised by parents and we have provided a suggested timetable to support this. In the Lower School, this work should be recorded in the red book provided. In the Upper School the tasks will be returned as requested by individual teachers.

Online Learning Phase

From school day 6 we will enter a new stage of education for your children, the 'Online Learning Phase'. From this point on, learning will be set daily, monitored and feedback given to the children, when appropriate. For the first few days this will be limited to core subjects only as children develop their understanding of how to use this technology. In the Upper School the platform used will continue to be 'Firefly'. For the Lower School we will be using a more age-appropriate interactive platform call 'Seesaw'. More information, including how to sign up to 'Seesaw' will follow when we move into the 'Remote Learning Phase' and suggested timetables will be issued.

When in the 'Online Learning Phase', work and activities provided will be following a structured timetable and comprise:

Lower School

Year 2/3 - Four sessions to be set per day covering daily English and Maths, with additional rotations of Science, Humanities, RS, PSHE, MFL, Art and DT, Games and Well-Being.

Year 4/5 – Five sessions to be set per day covering daily English and Maths, with at least two sessions of Science per week and additional coverage of Humanities, RS, PSHE, MFL, Art and DT, Games and Well-Being. This will be issued by teachers and will be supported by an additional platform, 'Century Tech'. Logons and further information on this will follow after the Easter break.

All – A welcome video message at the start of the day from the class teacher and an end of the day story read by the class teacher. This is to maintain day to day contact with their teacher.

An additional expectation will be that children read to an adult daily at home from a book of their choice and that this reading is tracked, as usual, in their reading diary.

Spelling will still be set on Spelling Shed as usual and the test dictated via video. Tests can be uploaded to 'Seesaw' to be marked.

Upper School

Year 6/7/8 – Tasks will be set on a daily basis using 'FireFly' and will appear in the tasks list for pupil when they log on. In addition to this, subject-specific platforms already known to the children will support learning in these areas, for example 'MyMaths' and 'Quizlet'.

During the 'Remote Learning Phase' we will also use 'Century Tech' to support learning for the core subjects through a personalised learning pathway. Logons and further information on this will follow after the Easter break.

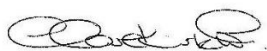
School Day

Class teachers in the Lower School will be accessible between 8.30 – 3.45 daily and Upper School teachers between 8.30 – 4.30 daily. Daily activities will be loaded onto online platforms by 9am each day.

If teachers do not immediately respond to you, please remember that whilst working from home they will also be managing their own family lives, as you are whilst away from work. Teachers will always respond within 24 hours during the working week.

As we begin on this unprecedented journey, there will be much trial and error for everyone; teachers and students alike. As we navigate a new world of online education there will be modifications and amendments to strategy that have to take place, we will always communicate these with you.

We feel very grateful for the support and positivity we have already felt from the school community during these difficult times and thank you for your ongoing support and understanding.



Clare Kirkham
Head of Lower School



Karl Newland
Head of Upper School



Lee Silva
Head of Digital Learning