

# ALL HALLOWS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

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Acting Headteacher: M A Baines

22<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents / Guardians,

## **RE: Remote Learning Post Half Term**

Firstly, thank you all for your support with remote learning. We know that in some households students have found it easy to adapt to the new way of working, but in many homes things have been more challenging. We know how painful it is to try and get children who want to be outside in the sun knuckling down at a table doing some quadratic equations! We have received so many emails of support for our remote provision, and some schools have started to replicate aspects of our offering like the fortnightly tutor phone calls. Thank you too for those that have sent in some constructive feedback about how, with a few small changes, we could make the remote learning system work more smoothly at home. We have read each of these and taken your points on board. We are going to take the May half term break as an opportunity to make some revisions that will exist until the end of the summer term.

Below I have summarised these changes that will come into effect from **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June**, but the key please is to [watch the accompanying video with your children](#) that goes through the changes they will need to know. As Mr Baines has said in his letter, for Years 10 and 12, any face to face provision will support, rather than replace, this remote learning programme.

### **1. Assemblies**

The first change is that we will be pre-recording weekly assembly messages to the students. These will be posted by the Heads of Year into the form group Teams' page. Please encourage your child to watch these to set them up with the right mindset for working. Pastorally, we think it will be good for them to see a friendly and familiar face each week.

### **2. SharePoint v Teams**

We are aware that having the work on both platforms has created some confusion. From Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June, all work will be set on Teams. There will be no instructions or resources set on SharePoint from the end of this week. **The video explains where the work will be saved on Teams from the 1<sup>st</sup> June.**

The only group of students that will still need to access SharePoint are those in Year 11 carrying out preparatory tasks for Sixth Form which, as now, is situated in each subject page on SharePoint.

### **3. Teams Chat**

Staff have been asked to switch on the 'Teams Chat' function for their classes, which means that students can post questions or queries on this forum when they are doing the work. It works a little like a Facebook wall, where people can post and comment on the posts, but this can only be seen by those within the class. We have also asked staff to invite colleagues from within their departments onto their class pages so that between them there will be someone online to respond to your child's query as quickly as possible, as long as it is at a reasonable hour!

### **4. Suggested Timetable**

Attached to this letter is a suggested timetable for the week for students. It contains a daily PE activity, and then 3 subjects for students to work on, each representing 30-50 minutes' worth of work. This is to serve twin purposes. Firstly, it will hopefully make the work more manageable. Secondly, the timetable will help staff know which days most of their class will be doing their work, and so when to be on hand to respond to queries via Teams Chat.



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## 5. Activities

From the 1<sup>st</sup> June, the tasks staff will be setting each week will be split into two types; 'essential' and 'take it further'.

### 'Essential' Tasks

The **essential tasks** take 30-50 minutes to complete and should be completed by **all students**. Students will do 3 of these a day if they follow the suggested timetable. To enable teachers to see how well their students are learning, the essential tasks will always include a weekly check on learning activity, which should be turned in as a Teams' assignment by 6pm on the Friday. This will allow teachers to check on the progress of each student more frequently and provide tutors with an up to date overview to discuss during their phone calls home.

### 'Take it further' Tasks

The **take it further** tasks are designed for those who have been working well up until now and would like some stretch and challenge. They are not time bounded and should be done only after the 3 '**essential**' tasks for the day are completed. We strongly advise students complete some of these activities, maybe when they find a topic engaging, but there is no requirement to do them all. If your child is struggling with working at home, it is completely reasonable just to focus on the 'essential' tasks. We hope these two types of task gives you and your family the flexibility to work to the needs of your child.

## 6. Feedback

Staff will be viewing and acknowledging each piece of work submitted as an assignment, with full written feedback being given to each student at least once every three weeks so that they know how they are doing. I know a few parents have asked whether students can be given more feedback. Whilst we have no way of knowing if the feedback is being understood, acted on, or even read, I would prefer staff to read the work and when they see common misconceptions, plan tasks for the following week that tackle those errors in understanding.

## 7. Variety

Finally, I have also asked staff to ensure there is greater variety to the activities. As we are all getting more confident with technology, more and more of us are pre-recording mini lessons for students using PowerPoint to good effect. Others are giving links to Oak Academy, Bitesize and making Teams quizzes and the such like.

### Online Lessons

A final area that has been at the forefront of our minds at All Hallows has been whether we could provide online lessons. Whilst we recognize the potential of the technologies available we also recognise the very real barriers for staff and families. Some will have good access to the internet while others will not. We know from our IT surveys that there are still many households sharing devices with parents working from home or between multiple siblings. We do not wish to cause anxiety for families who may feel their children are 'missing out' if they are unable to access video conferencing. Many of our staff are not in a position to offer wide-scale video conferencing as they may well be looking after their own families, as well as setting work for classes and supervising children of critical workers on site. Whilst I know some families will be disappointed by this decision, I hope you can understand the reasons behind it.

I hope that our changes outlined above will help improve the learning this half term for all our students and thank you in advance for watching the video with your child or children. Please encourage them to rest over the half term, to enjoy the weather and to spend time with their families.

God Bless,



Mr Ronnie Halton  
**Assistant Headteacher**