

Wednesday 10th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your feedback on the quality of our remote teaching and learning through our recent survey.

On average you gave us a 4* rating for the quality of work set, pastoral support received, and the communication received from school. The majority of respondents said that we are setting 'about the right amount' of work and that it is 'about the right level of challenge' which is reassuring at this unprecedented time.

Below are some of the most commonly asked questions and comments with our response and we have used all feedback to help us to improve our provision this term.

Q: My child is struggling/there is too much work/ the work is too challenging

A: Feedback suggests we are getting this broadly right for the majority of students but some pupils will find remote learning more difficult than others and will miss the support they normally get in school. Please contact your child's HOY if your child is struggling and focus on Maths, English and Science if needed.

Q: My child finds the work too easy/there is not enough work/can we have more work please

A: Whilst some pupils are finding remote learning challenging, others need more work to ensure they are engaged and challenged. From early in term 6, key stage 3 challenge projects will be available for all subjects on the school website so that pupils can choose to engage in a more difficult and extended tasks for subject(s) that they are personally interested in. We hope that pupils will find these a challenging and enjoyable way to extend their learning.

If your child needs more work in year 10 please check that they are completing all set work to a high standard, including any optional challenge work being set by their teachers, and then encourage them to revise all year 10 content using BBC Bitesize as a starting point in most subject areas. Revision tasks may include writing revision 'cards' to test themselves with; revision mind maps/posters of whole topics or practice exam questions or papers (available from their exam board website). You could also ask them to teach you a concept or topic as this will support them in memorising information and being able to explain it clearly and concisely. You or your child can also contact subject teachers directly if you would like more work.

Q: Why are Laureate Academy not delivering 'live' lessons?

A: This is something we have considered carefully and do continue to evaluate. Many year 12 lessons are 'live' as these are smaller class sizes and these older pupils have the maturity to manage these. Although some schools have made the decision to deliver 'live' video lessons, official national guidance states that staff and pupils should not be expected to participate in live video lessons due to safeguarding and well-being concerns. Screen grabbing visuals of teachers and misuse of these images is a concern as are the well-being concerns of both children and staff with the intrusive nature of seeing into each other's personal space. Live lessons can also put unnecessary stress onto families and staff who have to be in a 'lesson' at a set time which, in the current circumstances, is not always possible with other family members in the house and other commitments. However, as this period of remote teaching extends into another term, we know that pupils would benefit from more teacher interaction so we are introducing more pre-recorded audios of our teachers to help explain tasks and concepts (see below). Year 10s will also receive some face to face contact this term

in school. We are also introducing some subject tutorials in some subjects which will be 'live' so that pupils can ask questions and have some 'face-to-face' contact with teachers via 'teams'.

Q: Can we have more pre-recorded audio or video clips from teachers explaining tasks and/or content?

A: Yes. As this period of remote teaching extends into another term, we know that pupils will benefit from more teacher interaction to keep them motivated. Teachers will therefore be including more pre-recorded audios into some of their remote lessons this term to help explain tasks and concepts where possible and appropriate.

Q: Can we have more recognition please for pupils who are completing all of the work and going 'above and beyond' to encourage self-morale and a sense of belonging?

A: This is really valuable feedback as we want to help motivate pupils in every way we can. Individual teachers are feeding back but more can be done on this and we are considering a variety of ways to increase our recognition and praise for pupils. The 'Lockdown Ledger' will help to address this and letters are also going out more regularly to praise individuals who are doing really well.

Q: Can I have an overview or report of how my child is doing?

A: We encourage parents to log in to SMHW regularly to view the work your child has submitted, teacher feedback and comments and your child's scores on any quizzes or other assessments set remotely.

Q: Can we have more Oak Academy lessons please?

A: We are encouraging teachers to use Oak Academy when this covers content that is suitable. These are also an excellent source of additional lessons if you feel your child needs more work in any specific subject.

Q: We cannot submit work on SMHW

A: If you can email work to individual teachers instead then this is the best way to receive feedback but if this is not possible, don't worry. Let your child's HOY know so they can pass this on to teachers and continue to complete work in the way that works for you. Your child can tick work that is completed on SMHW to remove it from their 'to do' list even if they cannot submit it. This will help them to organise their workload.

Q: Will topics covered now be revisited when pupils do go back to school?

A: This will vary by year group and subject depending on the nature of the topic. The topics will be re-capped when schools re-open if appropriate or this will be done at a later stage in the year when new content needs to build on this prior understanding from the work set remotely.

Q: My child is finding the English work on Julius Caesar difficult and I am worried they will fall behind.

A: Julius Caesar is an ambitious text to study remotely but we have studied other difficult texts this year including Greek myths and Beowulf so try your hardest and don't worry if you can't complete every question. We want to see your child attempting the work and engaging with it. Current year 7 and 8 pupils will be studying Romeo & Juliet next year so will apply their understanding of Shakespeare to this and will have the opportunity to explore these plays together. This term year 7 and 8 pupils will move on to their next topics which include a consolidation of the work they have done this year followed by some work on sonnets and creative writing.

Q: My child is not getting feedback on all of their work or some questions to teachers are not answered

A: We aim to provide feedback on *most* of the work that your child is completing as we understand that this helps them to stay motivated and make progress. However, the amount of individual pieces of work being submitted is large for some teachers so some pieces of work may not get detailed feedback. If you have ongoing concerns please contact your child's HOY. We have addressed specific concerns raised in the survey feedback and will continue to monitor and improve this aspect of our work.

Q: There is a lot of work due on a Monday and this is too much for one day. There are also due dates in half terms.

A: Many teachers set work for over a full week. This may be set on a Monday and due the following Monday with the expectation that a pupil will complete it at *some point* during the week at a time that works for them and their other commitments and family members. We do not expect pupils to work over weekends or holidays. Occasionally a due date may fall in a holiday if a teacher has wanted to allow a full week for work to be completed which takes the due date into the start of a holiday. Pupils should aim to look at work that is set *before* the due date particularly in subjects they now know set work over the full week (which is most subjects except maths and science).

Q: My child is covering new content they have not learnt before and this is difficult.

A: As remote teaching and learning continues most subjects have now had to move on to new topic areas that your child may not have studied before in order to ensure they progress and cover new material, particularly in year 10 where the full content of the course must still be covered. To support students with this we will be using more teacher explanations via audio recordings, links to more on-line clips and copies of texts if required. We will also be increasing our 'face-to-face' contact with year 10 this term both in school and remotely.

Yours sincerely,



Ms S Hill

Principal Assistant Headteacher