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Latimer Community Weekly Newsletter

Friday 8 January 2021



Dear All

What a week! Was it really New Year's Day only seven days ago? Once again, the world seems to have changed dramatically since then.

On a positive note, thank you and your children for the rapid way in which Remote Learning has been set up and settled into. We hope that with a programme of 'live' lessons, this will help to ease some of the burden on parents and carers, especially those who are trying to juggle working from home. We hope that this lockdown will feel more like 'learning from home' rather than 'home schooling'.

Our thoughts are very much with our examination year cohorts who, like last year's students, have been thrown into a period of uncertainty about the final stages of their learning. As soon as we can provide updates we will. In the meantime, we ask that you reassure your child, ask them not to worry or overthink things, but instead, continue with learning their course content.

As a community, we have become well-skilled in navigating our way through choppy waters together and I am sure that we will continue to do so.

Our intention is to send weekly updates, every Friday, but will communicate more frequently if there is anything of significance to feedback on. The College may be closed to most students but we are here for you. So if you need anything, please just get in touch. Our mail@latimer.org.uk email will be monitored every day.

Regards
Siobhan Hearne
Principal

Educational Provision

'Live' TEAMS Lessons

Thank you for the positive feedback we have received about the provision of lessons. It is always good to hear when we are doing things well.



We also welcome feedback on any issues that arise. This week has been a learning curve for the staff as well as the students when it comes to remote learning. We are determined to do our best to ensure the provision is of high quality, allowing students to make progress despite being at home!

Students should be receiving 2-3 hours a day of 'live' TEAMS lessons most days. We are reviewing the current timetable and you will be notified next week of any updates for the week commencing 18th January.

A reminder that if you have challenges with your child being able to access a device, please do contact Ms Pankhania: jpankhania@latimer.org.uk We will do our best to support if we can.

A reminder that help and advice, as well as the timetable can be found at:
<https://www.latimer.org.uk/page/?title=Remote+Education&pid=147>

Protocols for 'Live' Lessons

Please thank your children for the way they have engaged in these live lessons so far. We understand that for some it may be daunting (it is for staff too) but they have risen to the challenge!



Just as a reminder, when on TEAMS lessons students should be muted and their camera off unless told otherwise by staff.

When asked to unmute and answer questions please encourage your child to do so as it will make the lesson more engaging and useful for them and for others.

Lessons can be recorded and if a student causes a disruption to learning we may ultimately ask them to leave the lesson and stop them joining live lessons in the future, with alternative work provided.

If staff are using the chat function with students, this chat function is for answering and asking questions within the lesson. It is not for general chat or gossip. If a student abuses this feature we will ask them to leave the lesson and may have the TEAMS:live function removed from them.

It is ideal if students can have a private working space and we would ask you as parents and carer to respect the privacy of your own children and the children of other parents and carers by not taking part in the lesson in any way, including monitoring/helping/advising.

Resolving Problems with 'Live' TEAMS Lessons

As we move to different technologies and become more experienced in them we are aware of some technological difficulties which are arising.

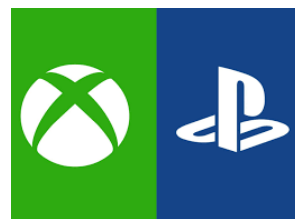
Staff are doing their best to make lessons as close to like being in school, including using breakout rooms, uploading worksheets to be completed and sharing of resources such as videos. We understand that sometimes, depending upon the device this is viewed on that this can cause difficulties. Please bear with us whilst we look at ways of overcoming these.



We would advise that if the device that a student is using does not have OneNote on it (a Microsoft Teams App) that you download this as this may help with some issues to do with sharing files and completing work. We have also found that using the 'TEAMS: app' works better than just accessing TEAMS through the web browser.

Using and Xbox or Play Station to Access Remote Learning!

Who would have thought it! We have been contacted by several people saying that you can use gaming consoles to help with access to the internet and remote learning. Although we have not tried this ourselves the hints for doing this are below.



If you require a keyboard please let us know and we will see if we are able to provide you with one by emailing jpankhania@latimer.org.uk

X-Box

- Plug a keyboard into the X box USB slot
- Go into my games apps
- You can then log in to the internet and access remote learning via the TEAMS web application
- You can also go to the school website

Play Station

- Identify the Play Station internet browser icon (it is WWW with dots around it)
- Press the OS\$ logo controller
- Go to the library and find options for games and applications
- Go into applications and you will find the internet browser
- You can then log in to the internet and access remote learning via the TEAMS web application
- You can go to the school website



We do ask that you encourage your child to read for at least some time every day. For those students in Years 7 and 8 they can continue to access our Accelerated Reader programme. We would like to pass on our congratulations to the following students:

Corey Burnett (7r2), who is the third student in Year 7 to read over 2 million words. In fact, Corey has now read the most words of all students in Year 7 and Year 8 at over 2,900,000 words! He is clearly making good use of his time at home! He is closely followed by Seth Diaz (7r2), who has also entered our multi-millionaire club!

Well done also to Katie Lee (8g4), Katie Perry (7r3) and Isaac Willis (7g2) who have all now read over 1 million words

We would also like to recognise Owen Willson (7g2) who borrowed 16 books from our library last term.

Epraise: Recognising and Rewarding Students



We really do want to continue to recognise and celebrate student achievements, like those of our reading champions. Staff will still be issuing Epraise points during this period of school and we will be holding our Easter Prize Draw at the end of Term 4. If you are particularly proud of something that your child does at home, please do let their form tutor know and they can award Epraise points accordingly.

Should you need it, this may provide you with a way of incentivising and motivating your child to engage in their learning during the period of school closure. There will be some great prizes up for grabs!

Safeguarding

Monitoring Student Engagement

It is important that we secure high student engagement and so we have implemented a system to 'register' student attendance at 'Teams' lessons. Where we have concerns about attendance or engagement, we will contact parents and carers to identify how we can work together to support.

Well-being Wednesdays!

Whilst it is important that we keep our students engaged in their learning, it is also important that we support them with their well-being and identify early if there are any emerging issues. One of the ways we ask that tutors do this is through leading a tutor time session every Wednesday. This will provide a great opportunity for your child to offer any feedback, ask questions and to engage with their fellow tutees.

If your child does not wish to speak at this forum but they would like some help and support, please encourage them to email their tutor in the first instance. Indeed, as parents and carers, we invite you to also contact your child's form tutor if you need to.

Key Information

Year 11 and 13 Centre Assessed Grades

You will appreciate that at this stage we have no idea how the process of awarding Centre Assessed Grades will take place for our Year 11 and 13 students. Whatever the process is, we can assure you that, with our students' best interests at heart, like last year, we will carry it out robustly, with professionalism and integrity.

You will also appreciate that under no circumstances will staff be permitted to discuss grades of any kind with students or their parents and carers. Therefore, we please ask that you do not approach staff on this matter.

Term 3 Calendar Events: Student Progress Review Evenings (SPREs)

We are unable to confirm at this stage if the Year 11 (Wednesday 20 January) or Year 13 (Tuesday 2 February) SPREs will take place as planned. We want to ensure that these would be a purposeful experience for both students and their parents and carers but given the uncertainty about the 'examination' process for this year, we are not sure what feedback and advice we would be giving.

So please bear with us whilst we see if further government communication is forthcoming next week and we will come back to you with confirmation.

What we can say is that it is important that we continue to deliver the remaining course content for all examination subjects whilst we are in this period of limbo and so it is vital for our students to fully engage with their Remote Learning programme so that they do not fall behind.

At this stage, our intention is to run the Year 12 (Tuesday 2 February) and the Year 9 (Wednesday 24 February) SPREs. For both year groups it will provide an opportunity to feedback on progress over Terms 1 and 2 and to feedback on student engagement in the Remote Education programme.

All of our SPREs will take place using a video call system and we will provide you with all the details in advance of the planned dates.

Calendar Update: 2021-2022

Whilst we all may have other priorities at the moment, our longer term planning must continue.

With this in mind, we wanted to make you aware of a small change that we have made to the calendar for the academic year 2021-2022. We have moved the Training Day that was scheduled for Tuesday 4 January 2022 to Friday 3 December 2021. The full [calendar](#) can be viewed on our website.

Team Latimer Community Corner

Keeping Spirits Up

Although we are only a few days into Lockdown 3, already there is a sense that this feels very different to last year. At that time, Spring (and Summer) was on its way, we could spend a lot of time outdoors and, in all honesty, we all probably felt that this would 'be over by Christmas'!

Although there is an end in sight, the year has not necessarily started with optimism or that sense of a fresh start. So now, more than ever, it is important that as a community, we look after each other.

Next week we would like to relaunch the community section of our weekly newsletter and would love to include feedback from Remote Learning activities that your child has undertaken or any other activities that they have done whilst at home.

Please do keep in touch; keep us updated on what you are doing and send some photos to jpankhanian@latimer.org.uk (preferably by Wednesday each week).