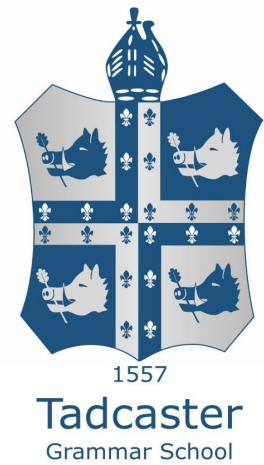


Be your best self

Thursday 26th March 2020



Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

As we all adjust to the new normal over the last few days, I thought I would write to give an update on where we find ourselves as a school.

Firstly, thank you to those parents, carers and students who have emailed to express thanks for the work the staff continue to do with planning and monitoring our 'remote curriculum' and supporting families. These messages have been very warmly received and continue to provide a boost to morale. The last week or so has presented us all with an interesting leadership challenge and I hope you feel that we are doing the very best we can.

Assessment arrangements for Year 11 and Year 13

Guidance from the Government on this important matter has been arriving in increments over the last few days. All the information we have received is available in the public domain, but it is generic in nature. Rather than trying to fill in the gaps with conjecture, I intend to wait for clarity via the Association of School and College Leaders, hopefully next week, which will set out the actual principles for assessment moderation after ASCL receives direction from the Department for Education.

We will of course ensure that all of our students who have been following externally accredited courses receive our very best attention in the weeks to come. As such, please could I request that parents and students do not approach individual teachers with queries about assessment arrangements at this time.

We also encourage Year 11 and 13 students to keep up with work they have been set and revision materials they have so that they are keeping themselves in the best possible position as we go forward. We hope to have further guidance for you concerning ongoing planned learning for Year 11 shortly.

Working at home - the remote curriculum

I would imagine that our students are finding a new equilibrium with the work which they are completing at home. We believe it is important to reach a sustainable balance between advancing learning and other activities. It is also important that students do not feel overwhelmed with work expectations at this time. In support of this, we have created a Wellbeing and Personal Development Google Classroom which all students have been invited to join. This signposts students to a variety of resources, ideas, activities and support agencies.

When we return as a school, all subject areas will adjust their schemes of learning to ensure a smooth transition back to school-based learning. In the meantime, our fantastic subject leaders and staff have been asked to plan for the remote curriculum according to the following schedules.

Key Stage 3
30 mins Maths/English/Science per day (1hr 30m in total)
1 hour key knowledge and skills (other subjects)
1 hour enrichment (or key knowledge and skills)
2 hours wellbeing

A typical 'working' day may look like:

Time	Activity
8:30am-10am	Essential key knowledge and skills (Maths/English/Science: 2-3 hours for each subject per week)
10am-11am	Wellbeing: get active; social (Facetime/Skype); break
11am-12	Essential key knowledge and skills (all other subjects*)
12-1pm	Lunch
1pm-2pm	Wellbeing: get active; helping around the house; new skill (cooking/cleaning/laundry!)
2pm-3pm	Enrichment tasks or more essential key knowledge and skills

* Check in with each subject at least once per fortnight

Key Stage 4
45 mins on Maths and English per day
40 mins on one option subject each day
40 mins on a second option subject each day
45 mins on Science each day
1-2 hours RE each week
2 hours wellbeing

A typical 'working' day may look like:

Key Stage 4	Example schedule
Time	Activity
8:30am-10am	Essential key knowledge and skills (Maths/English: 3-4 hours each per week)
10am-11am	Wellbeing: get active; social (Facetime/Skype); break (food and drink)
11am-12:15pm	Essential key knowledge and skills (your 3 options subjects - 2 hours each per week)
12:15-1:15pm	Lunch

1:15pm-2:15pm	Wellbeing: get active; helping around the house; new skill (cooking/cleaning/laundry!)
2:15pm-3:15pm	Essential key knowledge and skills (Science 3-4 hours per week; RE 1-2 hours per week)

Key Stage 5
1 hour 15 mins on each option subject each day
2 hours wellbeing

A typical 'working' day may look like:

Time	Activity
8:45am-10am	Essential key knowledge and skills (Option subject 1)
10am-11am	Wellbeing: get active; social (Facetime/Skype); break
11am-12:15pm	Essential key knowledge and skills (Option subject 2)
12:15-1pm	Lunch
1pm-2pm	Wellbeing: get active; helping around the house; new skill (cooking/cleaning/laundry!)
2pm-3:15pm	Essential key knowledge and skills (Option subject 3)

Please note that we will not be adding any additional work for students to be completing over the Easter break.

Other information

The school switchboard is not open. If you have an urgent enquiry, please use the 'Contact Staff' option on the school website or attendance@tgs.starmat.uk

For issues concerning IT access:

- For Google Classroom queries, students should email their teacher directly.
- For general IT support, please contact commsteam@tgs.starmat.uk (this address only accepts emails from STARMAT accounts)

Finally, I once read that a school is not the building, it is the people; I think our current situation reinforces this observation. Our wonderful school lives on, albeit remotely, and when we return we will be stronger as a community.

I hope you and your loved ones are well. The thoughts of all of the staff at TGS are with you.

My regards,

Andrew Parkinson
Headteacher