

Dear Parent/Carer,

As the Easter break comes to an end, we find ourselves facing at least three more weeks of lockdown and possibly beyond this. Whilst this is a challenging prospect for many families, we are determined to ensure that we support you by ensuring your child receives the best possible education whilst they are learning from home. We must remember that, at some point school will resume and life will get back to normal, therefore this time of remote learning is extremely important to ensure that your child does not fall behind. School will provide lessons and learning materials, we hope parents will support us by ensuring your child undertakes the work set to a good standard.

### Safe & Well Checks

It is vital that we keep in touch with our students over this lockdown period and we have a duty of care to ensure that they are all safe and well. We very much appreciate parents responding promptly to our communications and hope that you are finding this contact helpful and reassuring. Thank you for the lovely feedback our Form Tutors have been receiving, we really appreciate it.

### Online Learning – A reminder of how pupils access work.

In all years, students will be set work by their class teacher according to their current timetable to ensure no lessons are missed. We intend to use email and online resources to support this. A guide to accessing additional online support is on the website. In addition, many subjects have either already issued or are about to issue hard-copy revision material. All students who do not have access to the internet at home have been given hard copies of all work. Teachers will be available every day, during school hours to offer advice and support to our students.

All students can access the Student Zone at:

<https://greatbarrschool.sharepoint.com/StudentZone/SitePages/Home.aspx>

On the Student Zone, students will be able to access Microsoft Teams (which many staff will be using to set work), e-mail, their online folder of documents, along with various other useful online platforms and materials.

Your child's day may look like this:

Time	Activity
08:45	Prepare for the day, check work area and what work has been set by teachers.
09:00 – 11:00	Remote learning time
11:00-11:30	Have a break
11:30 – 13:00	Further work on remote learning
Lunch	
Afternoon	Engage in afternoon remote learning sessions

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## Online Safety

We have taken great care to ensure your child is well-informed regarding keeping safe online. However, although your home internet is likely to have parental controls set, it will not have the sophisticated filters that we have in school. It is therefore vital that you take time to remind your child of the rules of working online and expectations of their behaviour. Please remind students that we are here for them and if they have any concerns they can contact us at school. In addition, please find below sources of support for parents and children.

School Safeguarding contact: [j.finlay@greatbarr.bham.sch.uk](mailto:j.finlay@greatbarr.bham.sch.uk) or [secretariat@greatbarr.bham.sch.uk](mailto:secretariat@greatbarr.bham.sch.uk)

- Internet matters for support for parents and carers to keep children safe online  
<https://www.internetmatters.org>
- Net-aware for support for parents and carers from the NSPCC  
<https://net-aware.org.uk>
- CEOP for advice on making a report about online abuse  
<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>
- UK Safer Internet Centre to report and remove harmful content  
<https://reporharmfulcontent.com>
- Childline for support  
<https://childline.org.uk>

Students will no doubt be spending a great deal of time at home online and will need to continue to ensure that they are safe and considerate. A few things to consider:

- Don't worry so much about screen time, rather focus on screen use, what are they doing online?
- Whilst technology is good and so important at the current time, we all need a break from it, most guidance suggests having tech-free mealtimes and not having devices in bedrooms overnight.
- Talk to your child, take time to understand what they are doing online. The most important thing is that if something went wrong children feel that they would be able to come and speak to someone. The way we react when our children tell us about a problem is crucial, the safeguarding team at school are here to help you.
- Review your settings at home and ensure parental controls are set appropriately to restrict what children can access online. If you need further help or advice, please visit  
<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls>

## Breaks

It is important to build in breaks for your child. This is a good opportunity for a healthy snack, getting outside (following Government guidelines) or just to relax and chat to family or friends. During break times, it is recommended that students change physical space and, if possible, get some fresh-air. Remote learning means working alone and missing out on usual face to face daily social interactions with friends. They should try to have time away from screens, so talking to members of the household or telephoning friends is a really good idea.

## Fitting Online Learning Around Your Family

We have set out above our expectations and we recommend you follow this to ensure your child has a regular routine and structure to their day as this is best for their well-being. However, we also understand that your family may need to have a different routine: please do not put yourself under pressure adhering exactly to our timetable if this causes difficulty. It is fine for your child to start earlier or later in the day, or to have a longer break/lunch, some students may prefer working late morning and into late afternoon! Whatever meets your needs is fine. However, we do expect the work to be done, your child would normally be at school and we would like them to continue having good study habits to avoid any issues when school returns to normal.

### **Ensuring Your Child is Supported**

- Ideally, your child will get up, showered and dressed ready to start their remote learning by around 09:00.
- Set a space for them to do their learning activities, this is best at a desk or table and should be away from distractions such as the television if possible.
- Discuss the day ahead with your child, ask them to note down what activities/subjects they will be doing and when and encourage them to focus on their studies.
  
- Set alarms so that you know what time to end sessions and when to restart, this will also avoid any arguments with children if they know the time is pre-set.
- Provide a healthy snack and some fresh-air during the day.
- Check in with them regularly, ask what they have been doing, have a look at their work and praise their efforts.

### **Update on Examinations**

Following cancellation of this summer's GCSEs and A Level examinations, the coming term will be very different to previous years. We will instead be following guidance from Ofqual and the relevant exam boards in submitting a Centre Assessed Grade (CAG) for each candidate in each subject. Further details will emerge in the coming weeks on this process and we will contact parents of students in the appropriate year groups directly.

### **Sport and Exercise**

It has never been more important that students eat well and stay fit. Not only is keeping fit and exercising regularly vital in the current difficult circumstances, but it has been proven that regular healthy exercise has many positive effects on the ability of children to maintain concentration and achieve better learning outcomes. There are many video tutorials available online and your child may also be starting their day following PE with Joe Wicks broadcast on YouTube. In addition to generally keeping fit, your child may enjoy watching coaching videos in specific sports to improve their skills.

We will be in touch with you again in the coming days to provide any further updates that are important to support your child's education.

Yours sincerely



**Andrew Williams**  
**Acting Headteacher**