



Re: Home Study Update

Dear Parents/Guardians

First and foremost, I sincerely hope that this letter finds you and your family safe and well. If these last few days and weeks have taught us anything, it is that our health, and the health of our loved ones, has to be our greatest priority at this moment in time.

As a school, we are learning quickly, and trying to refine the ways in which we look to support parents and pupils during this period of lockdown. It has been pleasing to see, over this past week, that staff are fully engaging in the setting of work for pupils and that the vast majority of pupils have been doing their best to undertake this work. I am sure that you can appreciate that we were given no real prior warning by the government to develop our 'Home Study' programme and therefore it will take us a little time to work out the very best ways in which we can support the learning of pupils remotely.

I have been grateful for the feedback that my colleagues and I have received from parents regarding their experiences with supporting Home Study over these first five days, and we are moving quickly to respond to this feedback. We are very conscious of the role that St John's can play in making your life at home more manageable over these coming months, whilst also assisting with the academic progress of your child; hopefully, the tasks that our staff set moving forwards will be reflective of those intentions.

- As from today, staff have been asked to set a breadth of engaging and enriching tasks that require less support from parents, as it is clear that this has placed, in some instances, undue pressure on parents who are continuing to try and work from home or who have many different aged children to support.
- For students of Key Stage 3 (Years 7-8), our expectation is that pupils should spend no longer than 2-3 hours per day on work, no longer than 1 hour per individual subject and not all of this time should be written work.
- For KS4 & KS5 students, whilst students may want to include extra independent study time, a positive work-life balance is important. That is why we believe that around 3-4.5 hours of study a day is a healthy amount of academic work to aim to complete each day.
- Please note that there is still a genuine need for all KS4/KS5 students to complete all outstanding coursework and BTEC assignments. It is the school's intention to submit all coursework and BTEC assignment grades and, wherever possible, the actual coursework/BTEC assignments students have completed, to examination boards. It is also the school's intention to factor in a student's effort and performance on the coursework/BTEC assignment elements of any given course, when formulating the Predicted Grades they are to be awarded by the school.
- Students will not be punished for failing to undertake work; however, we are looking to continue to give good comments and praise for completion of tasks, as well as developing our website to showcase examples of some of the excellent work assignments that our

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pupils will be submitting.

- If, for whatever reason, a student misses a particular assignment on any given day, as a school, we will not chase this up - we know that families will be experiencing extenuating circumstances at this time and we will allow for this - students should just concentrate on the work set for the following day. We do not want students or parents to feel overly-pressurised at the moment as there is clearly a need, in this current climate, to place academic work firmly in perspective.
- The only work set for KS3 pupils over the Easter period will be enrichment-type opportunities. For KS4 & KS5 students, unless external coursework deadlines need to be met, each subject will set just one piece of work over these two weeks.

Please be mindful that it might take us a little time to adjust to these measures, however, as a school, we will do our best to refine our practice accordingly as quickly as possible.

Just so that you are aware, last week, we placed a document on our website regarding Home Study; the link is as follows: - <http://www.stjohnscs.com/attachments/download.asp?file=385&type=pdf> . There is a great deal of useful advice on this document to help you to support your child at home over these coming weeks and months; I would encourage you to give it a read when you get the chance.

I really do hope that the guidance that I have outlined above is helpful and that, in time, we are together able to do what is best for the young people of our St John's community during this uncertain time. Very best wishes for the week ahead and I do hope that you are able to find some joy in the Easter season when it arrives.

Yours sincerely

Matt Barron
Headteacher