



SIR THOMAS BOTELER

CHURCH OF ENGLAND HIGH SCHOOL

THROUGH GOD, WE CARE

GRAMMAR SCHOOL ROAD
LATCHFORD, WARRINGTON
WA4 1JL

01925 636414

01925 417468

INFO@BOTELER.ORG.UK

WWW.BOTELER.ORG.UK

/THOMASBOTELER



Diocese of Liverpool

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Chester

CKI/CO/ADMIN/ALLDEPTS/SLT/CK/MICROSOFTTEAMS

9th April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you will now be aware, when the Government moved the country to the Delay Stage of the Coronavirus Pandemic schools had to respond quickly to ensure that learning continued in some guise. Like many schools, we chose to use our well-established Show My Homework system as students, parents and carers were familiar with this and could access it on a range of devices. This has, and will continue, to serve a purpose in relation to communicating information to students and parents/carers regarding work that has been set for completion.

A new way of working – Microsoft Teams

As we are now in the next phase of our online provision, we have chosen to explore a much more interactive platform to facilitate greater online communication between staff and students. Following much consideration and research into various options we have decided that after the Easter holidays we will be using a programme called 'Microsoft Teams' (Teams, as we will refer to it) as our main form of lesson delivery. Whilst we are in a transition period of both staff and students familiarising themselves with Teams we will continue to post work on Show My Homework with a view to using Teams as our sole provision later next term. Teams is already part of our Office 365 package and students will be able to log-on through the website as they normally would for Show My Homework, it is the same username and password. A step by step user guide is attached to this letter and on the website www.boteler.org.uk/teams/

There are many advantages to using Teams. It offers much greater interactivity between staff and students, allows students to upload work and staff are able to offer feedback both in written form and verbally. Students can respond to this and ask questions 'live' online. As we venture further into our use of Teams pre-recorded video lessons are also an option with the right safeguarding measures in place.

We recognise the difficulties that students and families will have faced with a lack of obvious structure to their days. Many of our staff have experienced this themselves when working from home with their own children. With this in mind, and with our decision to use Teams, we are now in a position to move towards a more formalised timetable after the Easter break. The timetable will almost replicate a normal school day with three periods of academic study in the morning followed by engagement with a creative subject finishing with an enrichment activity. The new timetable will bring a more formal structure with clarity to a student's day and as work will be delivered in organised periods students will not feel over faced with the volume of work as they may have done previously. It will be clear as to what subject needs to be engaged with when.

What will provision look like?

So, what will provision actually look like? Each teacher will post work to their classes on Teams at the time of, or before the allocated lesson time. This may be a power point presentation, a word document, a voice over of a presentation, a pre-recorded video, a YouTube link etc. Students will then be expected to engage with the work. Student will recognise a familiar pattern to lessons including knowledge retrieval questions to start with, delivery by the teacher and then task completion by the student. Where possible, giving consideration to the home circumstances of our staff, teachers will be 'live' online to answer any questions



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students may have. Teachers will try their best to respond in real time, if not it will be at their earliest convenience

One of the biggest challenges for all schools is the task of providing feedback to students when they have completed their work. Again, Microsoft Teams enables this through either live text, audio or messages to the class. One of our regular assessments will be a knowledge quiz based on recent work via the Show My Homework quizzing facility. These assessments will be sent via Show My Homework, Microsoft Teams or both. They will be twice half-termly for Y10 students and core subjects at KS3 once half-termly for all other subjects. Teachers may also set additional tasks for which they will provide feedback on Microsoft Teams.

We understand the challenges that families are facing when trying to meet the demands of online learning in the home environment. There is no strict obligation to follow the proposed timetable in the order that it appears. An approach has to be adopted that suits your unique situation in relation to accessing IT devices, Wi-Fi availability etc. What is important is that the subject material needs to be engaged with and tasks completed by the end of that day. Some lessons will rely on students accessing, engaging with and completing tasks the previous lesson to help students know and remember more.

As this is a new way of learning for both our staff and students there will be some challenges. We may not get it exactly right first time, but we will refine use of the system as we progress. Our basic expectation is that we expect all students to 'attend' in accordance with their timetable or at a time that suits the home circumstance. This means engaging with Teams and/or Show My Homework on a daily basis. For those with barriers to IT, we expect full engagement with hard copy work that has been sent home. However, we are looking at solutions to support with this and more information will follow in due course.

Lastly, we expect all of our students to engage and behave appropriately in live class discussion or 'chats'. The allocated lesson time is precious and teachers will use this to the best of their ability to address any misconceptions or challenges that any students may have. High Expectations and High Standards are to be present at all times. Any behaviour that is not deemed appropriate will not be tolerated and it will be challenged. We would appreciate your support in outlining the expectations with your son/daughter for after the Easter period.

I'm sure there will be a number of questions as we embark upon using this new system. Please remember our children are likely to learn Tech much more quickly than adults, as it is a world that they are used to. I will remain the main point of contact for any queries supported by the ICT team. Please do not hesitate to contact me on kinsey@boteler.org.uk if you have further questions. If you have specific subject queries then please email the teachers directly, all their emails can be found in the school handbook which is online <http://www.boteler.org.uk/handbook/> page 74. Again, they will be more than happy to help you if they are well enough to do so.

We look forward to working together with you over this next term. We appreciate that these are unprecedented times but the education of our young people remains our focus and we are doing everything



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we can to support them and you in our current situation. We want to deliver an ambitious curriculum to ensure they enjoy their learning, make progress and remain engaged.

Please look after yourself and your families and stay safe.

Yours faithfully

Mr. C. Kinsey
Deputy Headteacher



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