

17 April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

### Junior School Remote Learning – Trinity Term 2020

I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your feedback at the end of the Lent term, following our initial remote learning trial week. We were incredibly proud of how the Junior School community embraced this new format of teaching and learning with patience, determination and good humour.

Understandably, the first week was always going to provide us with a helpful 'test run' to see what was working well and what we may need to review. Your feedback has therefore been invaluable and very gratefully received. As I mentioned in my end of term letter, it is an impossible task to find the perfect model for everyone; but the Junior School Leadership Team have spent quite a substantial amount of time over the Easter period identifying the main themes from the feedback received from both the parents and teaching staff, creating a model that we hope will address as much of the information you provided us with as possible. The key points identified are listed below:

What Went Well	Even Better If
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being able to seek support quickly using Microsoft Teams and responses were fast</li> <li>2. The Story Time folder</li> <li>3. Using two systems (Firefly and Microsoft Teams) which are both easy to use</li> <li>4. Voice notes and videos from teachers</li> <li>5. The range of tasks to choose from</li> <li>6. The ambition of the workload in order that pupils were fully supported</li> <li>7. The volume of work allocated to core subjects</li> <li>8. Clear and detailed teacher instructions</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A reduced workload, allowing for increased time flexibility to complete tasks</li> <li>2. More interactivity from teachers – filmed lessons that are recorded for those who cannot make the slots provided</li> <li>3. Increased opportunities for pupils to interact with peers and staff</li> <li>4. More open-ended tasks that can be completed independently</li> <li>5. Work to be available in advance for parents to set up their child's day the evening before/days before</li> <li>6. Consistent and accessible file types (.ppt rather than .odp)</li> </ol>

We are now looking forward to launching our 'new look' model ready for the Trinity term 2020 and are hopeful that by incorporating as many of the points above as we are able to; any amendments from now on will be odd tweaks and additions, to enable you to establish a

routine that works best for your individual home circumstance. We very much hope that it is reflective of your feedback being listened to and we have proactively worked towards a model which sits well within the needs of our entire Junior School community.

Mr Murphy has uploaded a PowerPoint entitled '**Parent Update – Using Firefly and Microsoft Teams for Remote Learning Trinity Term**' which can be found in your child's year group Firefly page under *Tutorials for Parents*. I encourage you to download this PowerPoint prior to Tuesday 21 April, in order that you have the full information you need to prepare for the first week of term.

I would like to highlight that we continue to be there for your child's pastoral and wellbeing needs, just as we were when College was open. We understand that this situation is incredibly challenging for the pupils; being away from their friends, their daily routine and teachers is not something they were expecting and, despite this being discussed in advance, it was a difficult concept for young children to adequately prepare themselves mentally for. It is also hard to be certain how each individual child may react to this unsettling time and we are therefore ready to assist at any point and are happy to support remotely as much as you need us to. As such, please do not hesitate to get in touch with your child's form teacher if you feel that your child may benefit from touching base with their teacher following a tricky day or week in addition to the timetabled sessions we have allocated according to the new timetable. We are hopeful that by including some 'recreational' time where they can interact and communicate outside of lessons with friends, as well as daily interactive form times with teachers communicating live, this will assist with making pupils feel better about the current situation they are in. However, if you do have any concerns, we are very much here to help.

In addition, we have launched a **Virtual School Support** page on the *JS Pastoral* section of Firefly, which you and your child can access at your leisure. It includes top tips, mindfulness and meditation links, support contacts, positive planning activities and plenty of other ideas which may be helpful to ensure that support is available for pupil wellbeing, as well as teaching and learning. This will be updated regularly so do use this whenever you are able to. You will see that there is a *Pupil Tips* section on this page which we hope will soon be filled with many different blog-style posts from pupils about ideas, activities and suggestions they have found helpful during the lockdown period. Should they wish to write an entry for the blog to share with the rest of the Junior School, or anyone else within the College who may be reading it, please email this to the JS Office ([jsoffice@sdmail.org.uk](mailto:jsoffice@sdmail.org.uk)), with parent permission for us to share the post/photographs included on the Firefly page. We believe that it will be a nice opportunity for pupils to see what others are doing and communicate remotely with their Junior School peers in a collaborative and supportive manner.

With the new introduction of live interaction on Microsoft Teams, overseen by the teacher, there will now be the option during Form Time of your child speaking remotely to their teacher and peers in a group chat. They are only able to turn their camera on with your oversight and consent given within your home setting. Any live teaching and Form Time will be recorded by the teacher and once it is over, the recorded video will automatically sit within that team, enabling children to go back to re-watch the video or watch it at a later stage if they were unable to take part. This means that any live videoing of your child will be accessible to the other children within that particular group. It is therefore vital that you discuss in advance with your child whether or not they are to take part in these interactive sessions with their camera on. They will still have the option of typing into the teams to

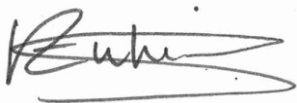
communicate without the video, should you so wish. Please ensure that if you do not wish your child to use the video functionality, that you email the Form Teacher directly in order that they are aware of this information so that they can conduct and direct the chat appropriately, knowing who can and cannot have their camera on. All Form Teacher emails are on the Firefly Pastoral page for you to access and we would be grateful if you can ensure that they are informed prior to their first Form Time session on Tuesday 21 April.

Please be aware that due to the INSET day on Monday 20 April, the timetable outlined in Mr Murphy's tutorial is amended for this week only due to the four-day school week. All resources for the first week will therefore be uploaded by 1800 on Monday 20 April, ready for you to download and there will not be any specialist lessons to upload for this week only to enable the extra day to be spent on core subjects. The first full week according to the new timetable will begin on Monday 27 April.

Should you have any questions, please email the following members of staff:

- Queries regarding remote learning generally, please email Mr Murphy at [amurphy@sdmail.org.uk](mailto:amurphy@sdmail.org.uk)
- Queries relating specifically to Pre-Prep, please email Mrs Rogers at [erogers@sdmail.org.uk](mailto:erogers@sdmail.org.uk)
- If you have any questions regarding any technical issues, please email [jsict@sdmail.org.uk](mailto:jsict@sdmail.org.uk)

Yours Sincerely



Miss L Whitwood  
**Head of Junior School**