

Trentham Academy

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5th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Following the government announcement two days ago, the academy remains open for vulnerable children and children of critical workers. If your child falls into this category and you need your child to attend in person, please email the academy and we will send a separate letter with further details. For all other students our digital blended curriculum is in place. It is essential your child fully engages with all lessons and completes the work set by their teachers. As we enter our second period of closure, we have all adapted and changed our working methods and therefore expect the students to adapt with us. The processes and expectations are as follows:

- All students will follow their normal daily timetable. For each lesson, a daily task will be set on Firefly with the lesson instructions and the Zoom code for them to join. Students must join this session. It is not optional. All teaching staff will be teaching content, checking progress and giving advice/guidance/requirements during these sessions which may vary from a short introductory session through to a full lesson. Students must adhere to Zoom protocols.
- Work to be submitted must be done so as per task instructions. This could be by Firefly, email or using the online learning platforms, for example, MathsWatch, Linguascope, CenturyTech, Educake and OneNote
- A register will be taken every lesson and recorded in line with our usual A2L numbering system. This is as follows:

- 1: Attended Zoom element and completed all work above and beyond expectations
- 2: Attended Zoom element and completed all work
- 3: Missed Zoom or did not complete all the work
- 4: Missed Zoom and did not complete any work to an acceptable standard

We will be carefully monitoring engagement by the students and will advise as appropriate if your child is not meeting our expectations.



Daily Routine

We know sometimes children find it hard to adapt to new routines; please support us by ensuring their iPad is fully charged and they are ready for our virtual academy day which starts at 8.40am. Also ask them about their learning experience as this is crucial to us continually developing our practice and supports their retention of the information.

IT issues

We understand that some families have problems with IT equipment or internet connection. It is important we know about this so we are able to offer help and support for your child. If your child is unable to access the curriculum at home, please complete this form to tell us about any access issues:

<https://bit.ly/3naeLPq>

Examinations 2021

Whilst the government announcement gave certainty about the closure of schools yesterday, it did not give certainty about the examinations for Year 11 and we await further guidance about this.

Ofqual have published the following interim statement:

We know that this is a difficult time for students, their parents and carers, teachers and trainers. Our message to students is this: please continue to engage as fully as you can in your education. That will be online for the majority of students, or face-to-face for those students still going in to their school, college or training provider. This will put you in the best position, whatever arrangements are made for your qualifications. It's important that teachers and students can focus on the knowledge and skills needed to equip students to progress to the next stage, whatever form that might take – whether to college, an apprenticeship, university or employment.

The way ahead is not straightforward: exams and standardised assessments are the fairest way of determining what a student knows and can do. We need to consider a wide range of qualifications – from A levels and GCSEs to many different vocational and technical qualifications – and the solution won't be the same for all. Following the government's announcement on Monday evening, we also need to consider how alternative arrangements will work for different students, including those who are independent learners. We are discussing alternative arrangements with the Department for Education. We know that many are seeking clarity as soon as possible. We will provide further updates as soon as we can.

The government has announced that schools and colleges can continue with the vocational and technical exams due to take place in January where it is right to do so. This may be particularly important for vocational and technical qualifications which require a 'licence to practise', which can only be fulfilled through practical assessment.

Simon Lebus, Interim Chief Regulator, Ofqual



For this reason, it is essential that Year 11 students continue to engage fully with the digital blended curriculum. We will be making phone calls or visits to students/parents if student engagement is not at the expected levels. Submitting work and assessments could be crucial to enable teachers to assess the grade your child could potentially achieve. For this reason, your child has their future very much in their hands with how they engage in their work over the next 6 weeks.

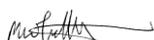
Any student due to sit the Cambridge National PE exam on Monday 11th January will be contacted directly by a member of the PE staff before the weekend. Students due to take the BTEC Enterprise exam in February will be contacted by Mrs Hazel in the next two weeks. The Examination boards have stated that no child will be disadvantaged as part of the process in determining this year's qualifications.

Finally

As you can imagine, the guidance we receive changes regularly and we will update you as and when our current situation changes. When we have any more information regarding how qualifications will be assessed this year, we will write to inform you. All I can ask in the meantime is that your child works hard and engages with the quality first teaching and our digital blended curriculum we are putting in place again.

I would like to thank you for the lovely messages that have come into the academy over the last few days/weeks regarding how hard the staff are working to support our community. We will continue to strive to provide the best opportunities for your children.

Yours sincerely



Mike Whittingham

Headteacher

