

Trentham Academy

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City Learning Trust

Inspiring Outstanding Achievement

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Dear Parents/Carers,

After a rather eventful start to the Spring Term, the online digital blended curriculum is now in place and staff are working extremely hard to continually improve this offer. We would like to thank you for your feedback; this has prompted some changes and has also contained much appreciated support and thanks for the staff.

Remote Education

The government has outlined some changes to the expectations of remote education. For children in key stages 3 and 4, they must have 5 hours of remote provision each school day. This should be a combination of live teaching and independent study. It also requires the school to monitor the engagement of learning for individual students on a daily basis. In order to do this, we have introduced registers for all lessons and it is important your child is present when the register is taken, unless other arrangements have been made with our pastoral team. Staff will then adjust registers after 3pm the following day to reflect the work submitted. Each member of teaching staff can teach up to 150 students a day and this means the work submitted can be checked for each student. We feel this presents a good compromise giving a little flexibility to the students if they wish to work in an evening and take a break during the day, but also supports our staff to manage their responsibilities in monitoring engagement and progress.

Some parental feedback has expressed concern at students having too much work to do. When planning a task for students, it is sometimes difficult to be sure how long work will take. When in school, teachers are able to assess this as a lesson progresses and adjust their expectations for individual students or groups of students. In a remote situation this is very challenging as there are a range of students who complete tasks at a different pace. If students are struggling to complete the work set, they should work for the allotted lesson time and then stop. When they submit the work, the teacher will then be able to adjust subsequent lessons to allow for this or support individual students who have been unable to fully complete the tasks.

Our staff are also adjusting again to live teaching sections for every lesson. Following your feedback and their reflection, we will ensure the following:

- Live lessons lasting for most of the lesson will finish a few minutes before the allotted time to allow changeover to the next lesson



- Zoom lessons will be set for the time students should join the meeting
- Students will answer to the register as they would do in class
- Students should ideally show their faces on screen. If they prefer not to do this, they must do so briefly if the teacher requests to see them for the register

Even our very experienced classroom teachers have very little experience teaching remotely and I ask you to support them as they continually develop and adjust their skills. It is not how any of us would prefer to teach; we miss the students and the classroom environment but are working very hard to create the best possible substitute that we can.

If you have any problems with the online provision, please contact the academy using the trentham@trenthamacademy.co.uk email address. If you feel your issue has still not been resolved, please call the office and ask to speak to one of the senior team. If, following this call, there are still issues that persist, please ask to speak to the Headteacher.

Students working in the Academy

The government has also stipulated that if students are unable to access the digital curriculum and teaching at home, they must come to school. We are trying to resolve any equipment and internet connections you have reported to us, so your children are able to stay at home but if your child needs to attend the academy because they cannot access the work, please let us know. Please continue to use this form to report any IT issues we can help with:

<https://bit.ly/38sCWUW>

Children of critical workers can also attend the academy. At least one parent/carers should work in one of the areas on the critical worker list and the government directive is that these children should stay at home if they can and go to school if there is no alternative. Please use our email address to contact the academy if you wish your child to attend. We welcome students to attend the academy if they need to but ask that this provision is used only where there is no alternative.

Lateral Flow Testing

We wrote to you last week about lateral flow testing and we intend to start testing later this week for those students in the academy who have given consent. If you would like to volunteer to support the testing programme, please contact the academy by email.

We are aware of the issue arising for people who have already had Covid-19 and can test positive for up to 90 days after the initial infection. We were advised on Monday not to test any student or member of staff who has tested positive in the last 90 days. If your child tested positive over the Christmas break and you did not inform the academy, could you please do so to ensure we have a complete list.

For this reason, if your child has tested positive for Covid-19 within the last 90 days we would suggest you do not give consent for testing. If you have already done so, you can withdraw this.

If you have not already done so, could you please complete the lateral flow testing form and indicate whether you do or do not give consent for your child to be tested. [Consent form for COVID-19 testing](#)



Reports and Progress

We will be following our usual curriculum for the duration of the academy remote learning time and it is important we continue to monitor progress and assess the work students have done. This will enable us to communicate effectively with you about your child's progress but also to plan our ongoing curriculum and ensure it meets the needs of all students.

With this in mind, reports will be issued for all students in March; final dates will be available on the website shortly. This report will be based on work completed during the Spring term, including some form of assessment. We will also report your child's A2L score based on their average A2L from 11th January to the date of the report.

INSET days

It is essential the staff have these planned continuing professional development days when they will be engaged in remote training.

25th and 26th January

The curriculum is suspended as with usual INSET days but to support students during lockdown, we will provide some optional activities for students to engage with. There will be no registers taken on these days as teachers and support staff will be involved in their training activities.

22nd February

We will confirm arrangements for this INSET day later this half term after reviewing feedback from the January INSET days.

Finally

We know how difficult this situation is for our community. As parents/carers you are working hard to support your child/ren and we thank you very much for this. We are investing all our time presently, to ensure we provide the very best digital blended curriculum we can. We will continue to communicate with you using email, phone calls and home visits and if you need any further assistance please don't hesitate to get in touch and our team will be there to support you. My warmest wishes to you and your family during this extremely challenging time.

Yours sincerely



Mike Whittingham
Headteacher

