

8 January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

As we find ourselves in another national lockdown, I am returning to my weekly email communications to keep you informed and with the intention of helping us to keep pulling together as a school community. My succession of letters informing you of changes to the arrangements to the start of term of Thursday 17th December, Friday 18th December, Thursday 31st December and Monday 4th January are a testament to the fast-changing situation in which we find ourselves. Even Monday's letter was out of date from the moment the PM made his announcement at 8pm on Monday evening.

Online Learning and attendance

I am enormously proud of the Stour Valley staff for stepping up so quickly to deliver the full school timetable remotely – those parents of students from Year 8 upwards will know that this is the first time we have delivered lesson wholly in this way and I think it is fair to say that the week has been a success on that front. Teachers have been really impressed with student attendance and engagement in online lessons. There is a real sense of us all being in this together. The patience and understanding students are showing as we all grapple with this new way of teaching and learning is very much appreciated. The emails from parents telling us how well it has been working this week have also been very much appreciated by staff.

I will take this opportunity to remind all students and parents of our expectations of conduct during this time. To this end I am including a link to the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy Covid-19 Addendum: http://www.stourvalleycommunityschool.org/downloads/policies/Behaviour_Policy_Covid_19_Addendum_SVCS_-_Approved_July_2020.pdf

Please ensure that you are familiar with the rules that apply during this time- in particular those relating to conduct during online lessons.

We are calling home daily for those students who don't log into lessons and I must remind you that you will need to call the absence line in the usual way if your child is too unwell to log on and attend their online lessons. On Tuesday we had 18 students across the whole school who didn't log on for their lessons; on Wednesday 16 and yesterday just 9. Our community is well and truly connected and we've got off to a great start!

GCSE Summer 2021 Exams Cancelled

A very significant announcement was made alongside the details of the national lockdown on Monday: that of GCSE exams being cancelled this summer. We really do appreciate that this is a difficult time for Year 11 students and their parents as there is still little clarity about how Year 11 will be awarded their grades this summer. Our message to students is to continue to engage as fully as you can in your education – teachers are planning and delivering the information and content you need in your online lesson and tutors and year leaders are also here to support. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any concerns.

It is likely that we will postpone the Year 11 Parents' Evening, which is on the calendar for the week after next, to ensure that when we do hold it we will have a clear picture of what we are being asked to do in order to generate the centre assessed grades. We will provide more information when we have it.

Free School Meals

Free School Meal parcels will be available for collection from school on Monday 11 January from 11.00am and on Tuesday 12 January. Please contact school if you have not yet completed the form to confirm your preferences for the parcel contents as they are being made to order.



From Monday 25th January the parcels will be issued on a weekly basis to ensure that fresh produce remains usable for the whole week.

If you feel a change in circumstances means that you may qualify for Free School Meals, please apply via the following link: [SCC FSM Online application](#)

Message from the Technology Department

As a part of remote DT lessons we are really keen to get students involved in practical style lessons at home. Therefore can we ask that students begin to collect various clean materials, particularly card from old packaging, corrugated card boxes, plastic tubs, toilet tubes etc, saving items from the doom of the recycle bin, as they will come in very handy. Descriptions of DT lessons on Teams will explain what resources are required for each lesson, and this could also include scissors, glue (Pritt sticks will be fine), tape and any other stationary fasteners that you might happen to have in your homes. They will not always be essential but having a set of resources & equipment will definitely make lessons more interesting and will help to get students away from those screens & onto something productive & creative yet manageable.

Thank you for your ongoing support

And finally our thanks to you, our parents and carers, for your patience, understanding and ongoing support in these ever-changing times. Please do continue to contact us with any concerns about your child and their learning and we do also enjoy and appreciate the emails to let us know when things are going well.

Stay safe and well.

With kind regards
Rachel Kelly, Headteacher

