



27 March 2020

Dear Parent or Carer,

Coronavirus Update March 27

I hope this letter finds you and your families well in this difficult time. It's been a busy week for the College with our priority being making sure we are setting distance learning, and planning so that we can remain open over the holidays for the very small number of students whose families are critical key workers.

This letter has updates on;

- Distance learning
- Easter Holidays
- Safeguarding

1) Distance Learning

In an example of how quickly things can change, our plan to enable parents and carers to collect **exercise books and folders** has been delayed by the current lockdown. When these restrictions are lifted we will make sure you are updated with how to collect these books.

It's **great to see so many students engaging with work** set and taking such responsibility for their learning. At the same time, we know it can be frustrating when platforms and software doesn't work the way we want it to.

Please remember if you have trouble logging in, to contact login@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk

If your daughter or son has not been able to access work, to have completed as much as they would have hoped, or to the best of their ability, **please reassure them not to worry**.

Our staff will be **understanding of the difficult and new situation** families find themselves in and will want to support you. Many families are struggling with caring for others and balancing childcare, as well as demands on IT systems and the like. We understand this.

2) Easter Holidays

We are now entering the Easter Holiday period, and it is important even given the current circumstances that everyone gets a break. **Teachers will not set work to be done over Easter**, other than what homework might be usually set.

Whilst we have a very small number of students on site, please note the **College is completely closed at weekends and bank holidays**.

Our teachers have been brilliant at adapting to such a strange situation, and it has been brilliant to see them support students over the past 10 days. Many of them are volunteering to be in over the holidays to support vulnerable and key worker children.

Please could I urge you to support them in taking the time to rest by **not contacting teachers over the holiday period with queries about learning**. For any issues around student safety, please see our advice below.

3) **Safeguarding**

Student safety in and out of school **is always our priority**. This does not change during our closure, and distance learning itself can bring added issues.

Please help us support student safety by;

- Immediately **reporting any worries or concerns**. You can use the white "Report an Issue" button in the top right corner of the school website at www.kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk. This will be picked up even during times we are closed.
- Noting that **we are not using any video conferencing** learning at present- all of our learning is set on classcharts or google classroom and should only be accessed by students using a College email and login.
- Noting the **advice available from our website** and from organisations such as National Online Safety (see enclosed).

It has been great over the past ten days to have seen the response from staff, students, parents and carers in pulling together to face our new circumstances. Students have made great efforts in adapting to distance learning. Parents and carers have supported this- even joining our Parent Voice meeting online. Staff have got on with completely new circumstances- we have even had colleagues designing, testing and producing (and delivering) protective equipment for primary care staff using our 3d printers.

We are really fortunate to be able to support one another in this way at this time. Thank you for your efforts and please have an enjoyable and restful Easter Holidays.

With very best wishes,



Alan Salt
Principal

10 TOP TIPS

REMOTE LEARNING FOR PARENTS

Remote learning can be a great way to continue learning outside the classroom, particularly in difficult circumstances. For parents and carers, the idea of remote learning isn't always straightforward and there can be a number of factors they need to consider, especially around ensuring their children feel comfortable and are familiar with the whole concept. That's why we've created this guide to help parents and carers support their child in getting the most out of their remote learning experience.

1) Take an active interest in your child's learning

As a parent or carer, remote learning will be a new concept for your child and there are bound to be a few teething problems to start with. Take an active interest in their learning and help support them whenever they need a helping hand.



2) Monitor your child's communication and online activity

It's important to remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exists as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite, remember their manners and not to post or send any negative comments just because they are behind a computer.



3) Establish a daily schedule and routine

Working from home and trying to learn in a more casual setting that children might associate more with play and a degree of freedom might take a bit of getting used to. Try to stick to a daily routine and use the timetable/schedule that schools have sent home to help children keep on top of their daily learning.



4) Encourage screen breaks away from devices

Remote learning will inevitably require more interaction with computers, laptops and tablets. Teacher's will invariably advise on screen breaks however it doesn't hurt to keep a check on their time online or encourage them to get some fresh air/exercise.



5) Ensure your learning device is in a public space in the home

It's important to consider where your PC or laptop is placed if live video is being used. Try to keep the background neutral with no personal information visible and move learning devices out of the bedroom as this could be deemed inappropriate.



6) Implement safety controls and privacy restrictions on apps and software

Dependant on how your school implements remote learning, your child may be required to download certain software or apps. Whilst these are likely to be relatively safe to use, like any other new app or platform, parents should still implement safety controls as a precaution.



7) Ensure your child only uses official school communication channels

It's important that all communication with teachers and school staff is directed through approved school channels, whether that be through the school's online portal or the relevant secure messaging site.



8) Familiarise yourself with relevant school policies

Schools should have a policy on remote learning and direction that they can share with parents. Familiarise yourself with this and ensure you know what is expected of teachers and your child during lessons, both online and offline.



9) Maintain feedback with teachers

Engage in communication with teachers where possible and try to feed-back progress and development as well as any helpful suggestions around the learning process. Be transparent but remain professional and only use official channels to communicate.



10) Monitor your child's wellbeing and mental health

Remote learning will likely mean that your child won't get the same level of social interaction and might not see their friends for a while. Keep a check on their wellbeing and try to encourage them to get out as much as you can. Whilst learning from home might seem fun and exciting to start with, missing out on seeing their friends everyday might take its toll.

