



Barrow Hills

SCHOOL

Friday 10th April

Dear Parents,

I am writing to update you on our plans for distance learning for next term. We have spent time over the past two weeks reflecting on our approach in the final week of the Spring Term. We have taken on board feedback from parents, children and staff about the successful elements, and considered how we can adjust to work out the kinks that we experienced too. In this letter I will be outlining what you can expect from the School over the coming weeks until we are able to return to the school campus.

Adjustments to the timetable

We are maintaining our spread of subjects across the curriculum and will be keeping to the normal timings of the school day. In response to feedback, we have made a few adjustments to when particular things happen in the day. This has allowed us, for example, to schedule games/PE at the same time for all children in Years 5-8 so that families with children in a spread of year groups can exercise together. Timetables for individual year groups will be communicated next week.

How we will communicate work

All learning for children in Years 5 to 8 will now be set using Google Classroom. We have found this to be a user-friendly platform and it allows children to take ownership of their learning.

This will mean that you, as parents, will no longer receive portal notifications about learning tasks and no longer have direct access to their learning tasks. However your children will be able to show you what they have been set for each lesson in the Google Classrooms on their Chromebook.



Children in Years 6 to 8 will already be familiar with receiving their learning via Google Classroom and we will be introducing it to Year 5 as they get up and running with their Chromebooks.

Work will be set by each subject teacher into the Classroom and will be available the evening before the scheduled lesson.

What kind of things to expect

Learning tasks will vary hugely across the age ranges and subjects, just as they would when children are in school. There is likely to be a mixture of formal written work, where children may be asked to answer questions, typing their answers into a Google Doc, and more practical tasks which might need to be photographed or videoed. Children may also be asked to create slideshows, conduct research on the internet, view videos, complete online worksheets, and log onto specific websites to access resources or complete tasks. This is not an exhaustive list! They may also need to print some resources.

Some teachers are developing the option to deliver learning live for some of their lessons using Google Meet. Where this is the case, this will be communicated to children through their Google Classroom. Please be aware that all live lessons will be recorded. This will allow us to then share the lesson with children who weren't able to be present at that time, and also gives us a record for safeguarding purposes.

Handing in work and receiving feedback

All work should be handed in via Google Classroom. Some tasks will be set which can be completed directly in the classroom, and there is a 'hand in' feature. For more practical tasks, photos and videos taken can also be uploaded to the Classroom and handed in.

Wherever possible, teachers will be available to answer children's questions during the lessons as per the timetable. Within the lesson, children should communicate with their teachers via Google Classroom - they have the option to post to the whole class or just to the teacher. Due to personal circumstances, illness, and staffing of provision for the children of key workers, some teachers will not be available within the lesson, however they will respond to children's queries as soon as possible.

Once work is handed in, your child's teacher will be able to see it and make comments as they would do when marking their written work at school, giving a mark or percentage if applicable. Children can see and respond to their teacher's feedback in Google Classroom. Where work is handed in during the timetabled lesson time, teachers will aim to give feedback in time for the following lesson in that subject.

Year 8 Curriculum

Year 8 would ordinarily spend the coming weeks revisiting prior learning and honing their exam technique, building up towards their Common Entrance exams in the first week in June. As, in conjunction with our destination schools, we have taken the decision not to go ahead with Common Entrance this year we have reviewed our approach for Year 8. Teachers of Common Entrance subjects are currently working hard on developing a scheme of learning for the coming weeks to keep Year 8 engaged and interested in their final term at Barrow Hills. It is worth noting that while all of the senior schools that Year 8 are heading to are happy not to receive Common Entrance papers, we will be providing them with a report in lieu of this, and senior schools have asked us to report on the extent to which each child has engaged with their distance learning, so it is crucial that this is not seen as an excuse to switch-off!

We anticipate that, as all children in Years 5 to 8 will now have their own Chromebook to use, most children will be able to engage with the majority of lessons that are offered. However, we are aware that each child is different, and some will cope with distance learning better than others. While we continue to offer our broad curriculum, if you find that your child is finding it difficult to manage their day please get in touch with their form teacher and we can explore options for scaling things back on an individual basis.

The pastoral team will be getting in touch soon to update you about a number of other matters, including details on how they will be keeping in touch, assemblies, and registering each morning.

Your child's teachers are currently hard at work adjusting their normal planning and approach to ensure the best possible outcomes for your child during this time and I hope that this letter has been useful in giving you an update on our planned approach. We are looking forward to welcoming your child back to school in the virtual classrooms, and back to the school campus as soon as we are able to.

Kind regards,



Sarah Poyntz
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