

Coronavirus T&L update letter for Y7- Y10

22nd April 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

With school closures remaining in place I wanted to update you on how we can continue to work together in supporting your daughters learning.

Supporting school work at home is not easy and as a school we recognise this and are extremely grateful for all that you are already doing in these difficult circumstances. Please be kind to yourself, we are not expecting you to replace your daughter's teachers or try to replicate and recreate what your child would be doing in a classroom. This would not just be tricky but at times impossible and we understand that.

Maintaining some degree of normality in these difficult times will however help your daughter. This includes establishing regular routines and study habits. Learning should follow the normal school timetable as much as possible. Getting up and dressed and ready to learn by 8.45am will help your daughter manage their time effectively not only now but also support the adjustment that will be required when we do return to school.

Our departments continue to provide daily high quality lessons via Google Classroom. The quality of these lessons are monitored by Heads of Department to ensure that all work assigned is in line with our high expectations. Teachers are online daily at your daughters' lesson time to offer online support; whether that be to help them overcome a work item they may be finding difficult or to motivate them. We can assure you that the teachers have continued to demonstrate the utmost professionalism throughout this period and have exercised every opportunity as teams to create lessons that both engage and ensure that your daughter continues to make educational progress. The topics being taught are in line with our departmental schemes of work to ensure that lessons are sequenced and your daughter will make a smooth transition back into school without any gaps in their knowledge. It is vital that students let their teacher know via the Google Classroom register that they have logged onto the lesson. As a school we continue to follow up any non attendance and keep you informed.

In addition to the work being provided by the school there is a whole range of other resources that you as parents can tap into to further support your daughter. Indeed these resources could be useful for younger primary school siblings too.

## **BBC Bitesize**

The BBC has expanded the resources it has available on its website. BBC bitesize has launched daily lessons which can be accessed by students and parents to further support learning. They have utilised the support of many great celebrity experts to provide engaging activities on a range of topics across different age groups. The national treasure Sir David Attenborough who loves the natural world will be helping to teach about the oceans of the world and explaining why animals look the way they do. The Man City striker Sergio Aguero will be helping us with our Spanish.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>

## **Children's newsround**

As an adult watching the news at this particular time can be very upsetting and create anxiety. It is important that we monitor children's exposure to the news ensuring that they are not reading fake news and are able to process the information in an age appropriate way. I would highly recommend children's newsround for your daughter. It continues to inform students about what is going on in our world with coronavirus but also selects news items from a range of different areas and teenagers' interests to vary what they are reading. Today's articles include; when and how to see Lyrids meteor showers and why does the Queen have two birthdays.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround>

## **BBC Four**

BBC four is showing evening programmes to support both GCSE and A level curriculum. Whilst your daughter may not be at that point in her education yet a bit of foundation building is always useful. There are many documentaries covering a range of topics including a period drama on Shakespeare's A Midsummer's Night Dream or a documentary on the rebuilding of Notre Dame.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcfour>

## **Ted Talks**

Ted talks are extremely educational but selecting the most relevant ones for a younger audience can be tricky. Ted-Ed is an organisation behind the Ted Talks and has created a wide range of videos that are more student friendly. Your daughter will be familiar with seeing these as they have been regularly used in registration time.

<https://ed.ted.com/>

## **YouTube**

The YouTube channel Free School offers a range of videos on different topics from Biographies for students to famous artists and even some classical music from Mozart.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/watchfreeschool/playlists?app=desktop>

## **Oak National Academy**

The government has this week launched the Oak National Academy learning platform which provides 180 hours of online video lessons per week which are age and subject specific.

<https://www.thenational.academy/>

## **STEM Learning**

STEM Learning has put together a range of free curriculum linked activities. The aim of this organisation is to improve lives through a world-leading science, technology, engineering and mathematics education. They have utilised a range of science experts including the astronaut Tim Peake who is seen answering questions about his amazing space adventures. Subject experts are available online to help every weekday. There is also some guidance for families included such as The science of learning for parents by Join Paul Howard-Jones which explores what goes on in the brain when learning is taking place.

<https://www.stem.org.uk/home-learning#curriculum-linked-resources>

Alongside online learning I would advocate the importance of reading for pleasure. Reading is proven to develop the mind and improve vocabulary. If you have access to paper books at home please encourage your daughter to read them. I am working with our school librarian to compile a list of free online books which students can access. In the meantime I would like to direct you to this website which has some recommended reads.

<https://www.worldbookday.com/ideas/100-stories-to-share/young-adults/>

Learning in schools does not just happen in a classroom, indeed the hidden curriculum is just as relevant as the formal curriculum in educating your daughter as lifelong learners. The hidden curriculum includes the interactions that your daughter has with her peers. This social function is very important and in our current lockdown situation it is important that your child sets aside a time each day to catch up with their peers. A 10 minute phone call or video chat between a group of friends is so beneficial for their mental well being.

I am often asked how many hours should my child spend learning. This is a difficult question to answer as all children are different. If your daughter attempts all the work set by their teachers then you can be confident as a parent that they are learning. It is always better that a child spends time enjoying their learning rather than feeling that they have to tick off an endless list daily. There will be times when the work may make them feel frustrated, especially if they are finding it hard. It is important during these periods that your daughter asks their teacher for help on the online Google Classroom stream but also takes a break from working. A short break to make a drink, or complete a little alternative domestic task or a conversation about something else can make all the difference.

And finally, I want to highlight the importance of the other lessons that your daughter can learn at home. There are life skills that will undoubtedly support them in the future such as

cooking a family meal, taking responsibility for a chore in the house, reading to a younger sibling, doing a bit of gardening or learning to mend an item at home that needs fixing. By contributing to the functioning of the home they will both learn and hopefully support you too.

It has been lovely to see the high quality of work that students are completing whilst in this period of school closure. Their teachers continue to praise their efforts and the support you too are providing your daughter. The creativity demonstrated in the work is fantastic and shows they are both happy and thriving despite the situation. We would like to thank you for continuing to work in partnership with us. Should you need any further advice and support please contact us at [office@stangelas-ursuline.co.uk](mailto:office@stangelas-ursuline.co.uk) and we will do our best to support you and your family.

Kind regards

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