

January 2021

Dear Parent(s)/Carer(s),

As we end our third week of remote learning since the start of this third lockdown, I cannot tell you just how proud I am of the way in which our staff and our children have responded to the challenges.

It was lovely to see our year 11 parents and students at our virtual parents evening on Monday. In the most unusual of times, it was great to see so many of you. The feedback from our parents evening systems has been excellent but if there are ways you feel we can still improve, we would love to have your comments.

### **Remote learning**

Staff have continued to find solutions to issues that the situation has posed, developing the use of technology to support learning and give feedback to children remotely in a timely way. Mrs Baird and I produced a short video to support parents and student in remote learning, and the online event this week hopefully helped to provide support for specific queries.

Students should be expecting to access their full curriculum as much as possible. We do understand that there may be more than one child working at home and that the resources available may not allow you to have them all on live lessons at any one time. Please contact us if you are having difficulty with the remote learning. We have now received devices to distribute to students who do not have access to a laptop at home. These take a while to set up so please be patient with us while we get the software installed to ensure they have everything they need and will have the right safety settings on. As soon as they are set up we will contact families to let you know when they can be collected.

There is some help available via Three, Smarty, Virgin, EE, Tesco and Sky who are all taking part in a government scheme to support parents with mobile data.

Please see the following link: <https://get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk/about-increasing-mobile-data>

Whilst we are providing 5 hours of remote learning each day, and students would normally complete this amount in school, we do realise the pressure that this can put on families at home. We have asked staff to be flexible in their approach to lessons and have taken the decision to make lessons between 45 minutes and 1 hour in length. This will hopefully allow students to have short breaks from their screens during the day.

Please get in touch with your relevant year office if you need help with any aspects of remote learning.

### **Free School Meals**

We are continuing to run our food bank through school and have had another generous donation from Tesco in Rugeley this week to replenish stocks.

The food parcels that Morrisons have sent out have been well received but we recognise that parents will prefer to have vouchers to be able to choose their own shopping each week.

We are hoping to have vouchers ordered and out to parents by Friday this week (22/1/21) to replace the hamper/food parcel orders. We expect that this will work as it did before. If you have recently become eligible for Free School Meals or if you are not sure whether you would be eligible, please contact us on [office@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk](mailto:office@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk) and we will support.

### **Exams – year 11 and 13**

You will be aware that there was an announcement on Friday evening regarding a consultation for the exams process in 2021. The link for you to respond if you wish is here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-how-gcse-as-and-a-level-grades-should-be-awarded-in-summer-2021>

As I said last week, as soon as we have more information regarding the methods that will be used to provide outcomes for students we will, of course, communicate this to you. Until we know more it is really important that students continue to engage fully with their remote learning timetables so we can have as much information as possible to assess their progress.

### **Critical Worker School**

Students in school are following the online learning programme set by their class teachers. If you have requested a place that you no longer need please do let us know via the email [office@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk](mailto:office@chaseterraceacademy.co.uk)

It is important to us to provide places to the families who absolutely need them but we do have to balance this with ensuring we have the capacity to staff the school as well as ensuring that teachers are available to teach their remote learning lessons. This will become more challenging if we have high numbers of requests for critical worker places so we do ask that this provision is used only if necessary. We ultimately want to provide the best learning experience to all children alongside supporting all of our critical worker families that need us.

### **More to follow...**

For now, please look after yourselves first and make sure that you get help if you need it. There are still staff in school so please do call if you need us.

The phrase 'we are all in the same boat' springs to my mind in times like these. In fact, we encourage our staff to think about being in the same storm, rather than the same boat. We recognize that you will all be navigating your way through these times in very different vessels and if you need us to help you to stay afloat, please do call. We are here to help in any way we can, and care very much about our families. We certainly could not do this without your support and generosity keeping us afloat!

Thank you for everything you are doing to help your children and us, please keep in touch.

Kind regards,



**Nicola Mason**  
**Head of School**