



# BENTON PARK SCHOOL

*'Creating a climate for great learning, success and opportunity'*

20<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, a warm virtual welcome back to the summer term to all of our students and families after the Easter holidays. During these strange and difficult times we hope you all managed to get some rest, relaxation and family time together, helped at least by the warmer weather.

We have had some fabulous examples of the Easter project work completed by our students and we are looking forward to sharing some of these with you all on our Twitter page and through our next parent bulletin. It really is a pleasure to keep up to date with what our students are managing to achieve and the creativity they are showing. Please keep on encouraging them to share work with us, as it really is a positive boost for all of us.

You will have no doubt heard over the weekend the speculation in the media regarding the reopening of schools. The Education Secretary was very clear in his briefing yesterday that no decision has yet been made. As Headteachers, we are constantly working collaboratively together to try and ensure that our views, which are based on the very best interests of our students, are taken into account. As soon as we have any developments on the plans we will, of course, share them with you.

In the meantime we are continuing to develop and fine tune our remote learning strategy to ensure that we can support all of our students in their continued learning. Teachers and students continue to use Teams for setting and completing work. From feedback we have had with some of our students and parents this seems to be working well. However, we will be conducting wider research on your views and those of our students during the next week to ensure we are approaching our remote learning in the best way possible.

Much of the work set to date has focused on consolidation of prior learning and making sure that students are able to access the work successfully. We fully appreciate that this represents a very different style of education and we would like to thank you for the support you have given to us as a school and to your children as they work through this. Home learning can present a number of challenges, so we really appreciate the efforts that both children and parents/carers are investing in this to enable it to be as effective as possible.

We are now confident that our students are adapting exceptionally well to this new learning and so during this next half term our work will increasingly focus on the delivery of new content. This will enable our students to broaden and develop their learning, allowing them to continue their progression ahead of a potential return to school. We hope our students will enjoy the challenge of this new content and we would ask for your support in encouraging them to engage with it fully to ensure that they are in a strong position at the point at which we return to school. We understand that every student is in a different position and so our intention is not to add further to any anxiety. The clear message to our students is to do their very best to engage in the work set and to contact their teachers if they have any concerns or difficulties. Your continued support with this is much appreciated.

Secondly, we are keen to allow our students in Years 7 and 8 to demonstrate their learning and progress, just as they would have done if they were in school. To support these students,

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revision materials will be sent over the next two weeks in English, Maths, Science, Geography and History, followed by an assessment.

We understand that students all have different circumstances at home and do not expect them to sit for long periods of time in total silence doing their assessments. However, we would ask for your support in trying as far as possible to create a quiet area for them to work, at a time that suits you as a family. Once completed, the assessment should be returned to their teacher through Microsoft Teams. For students who do not have access to the Internet, or are unable to complete work set via Microsoft Teams, paper-based work packs and the accompanying assessments will be sent out, in the same way we have been sending work out up to this point.

We understand that we are all trying to manage new and very different circumstances in what is a very emotional and challenging time. We would encourage our students to try and adopt a clear routine in line with the school day, including breaks and time out for sport and exercise, obviously in line with government guidelines. We do not want any of our students or their families to struggle with the new learning expectations and we would always encourage you to speak to our pastoral staff during our weekly welfare calls. Equally, please feel free at any time to make contact with us if you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of this situation. We have lots of useful resources for wellbeing on our website and would encourage everyone to have a look at <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help-for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

We are posting lots of recreational and educational things to do on our Twitter feed @BentonParkSch and in addition we are sharing some inspirational webinars with all of our students via Teams. There is plenty to keep them busy.

We will continue to keep in touch with you all, but in the meantime please feel free to email [secretary@bentonpark.net](mailto:secretary@bentonpark.net).

Take care and stay safe.

Yours sincerely

Delia Martin  
Headteacher

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