



HIGH STANDARDS, HIGH ASPIRATIONS, HIGH EXPECTATIONS

17th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As it has been a few weeks since my last update I just wanted to touch base with our families. As you will probably know from the news there has been little update or movement in the reopening of schools, particularly secondary. Therefore, as I communicated in my last letter, we will not see most of our community return to Bristol Met physically until September. This is of course disappointing for us as a staff body and also for you as families but we know we must continue to follow the scientific advice particularly as the last thing any of us want is for this situation to continue any longer than it has to.

This week, in line with the Government's guidance, we have welcomed a (small) group of our Year 10 students back into the building each day for their 1:1 Academic Mentoring session. We also started offering two "Live Lessons" each day (details, links and timings sent to Year 10 students on email and also posted in Show My Homework). So far this week we have delivered Maths, Science and Geography. We have English, History, and MFL to come along with some pre-recorded lessons. The live lessons are also recorded and available in Microsoft Stream for watching after the event. Again, details have been shared with Year 10 students in their emails (open Microsoft Stream from within Office365 Apps and click 'Discover' and then 'Channels' and look for a channel called "Year 10 Live Lessons @BMA.") Unfortunately, we can't share the recordings with parents directly (a limitation of the O365 system) but please do ask your Year 10 student to show you any.

Once we have Year 10 up and running we will be looking at trying to offer a reduced number to other year groups to give some 'face to face' contact for all year groups before the Summer break and (we hope) our return to the Academy in September.

We continue to offer provision for keyworker and vulnerable students each day. Uptake understandably varies on different days in line with work patterns so we thank you for letting us know in advance which days you may need to use this provision and engaging in any contact from House Teams. Although we have a large building with the current guidance and balancing of resources in terms of on site provision, live lessons, academic mentoring, distance learning and remote working there is a finite resource and therefore we are having to regularly check in with families particularly if you have indicated you would need access and then students don't arrive. We hope you understand our need to use our resources as sensibly as possible in the current climate and thank you for your understanding.

We are still waiting on the laptop and internet dongles through the DfE Laptop scheme. As soon as these are delivered we will provide them to those students who have qualified.

Following on from the 'Black Lives Matter' material we sent around the week before last we have also provided some follow up materials and activities to students through ShowMyHomework. Please do ask students about the activities and get them to share their ideas with you (and us).

Yesterday the Government confirmed that the national free school meals voucher scheme would be continued across the Summer break. This is very welcome news for our community at this difficult time. A reminder that if your circumstances have changed, particularly over the recent months, it may be worth checking whether your child(ren) would now qualify for free school meals support as this would bring a voucher of £15 per child per week for a supermarket of your choice. You can check and apply online at <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/schools-learning-early-years/free-school-meals>



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There has also been some speculation recently in the media around “catch up” over the Summer break. We know this will bring a mixture of feelings to families and children. Some would happily spend time in school over the break, others would, understandably, feel that they deserve a proper break given they have continued to work throughout these recent months. We share their feelings. Currently there has been no concrete direction or planning from the Government on this and therefore please reassure students that they are not going to be summonsed to the building every day during the summer break. As and when we have any information on any potential summer break provision we will of course communicate this to you.

The Government have also published some guidance and ideas for parents to support young people in this time of remote learning/distance learning which may be of use. It can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/help-secondary-school-children-continue-their-education-during-coronavirus-covid-19>

As always, I hope all of our community remains well and safe and thank you for your continued support, patience, understanding and kindness shown during this situation.

Yours sincerely

Cameron Shaw
Principal