

Education at Home - guidance for students and parents

During these unprecedented times, it is certain that many members of our community have felt a little overwhelmed by things! We know that activities set on our Google Classroom are not currently perfect and that this is causing some frustration. Please be patient and continue to support us in this whilst we focus on making Google Classroom better for our children. Thank You to those families who have already given us some constructive feedback about how we can refine Google classroom to make it easier to use and to access learning. For any who have managed to stay on top of it all, well done! For all of those who haven't, do not worry! You are not alone and we are here to offer some clarity now in how you can manage your child's learning and wellbeing at home.

Following your feedback, these are the steps we will be taking to lighten the load:

1. No new work will be set between Monday 30th March and Sunday 19th April. This will allow time for any outstanding tasks to be completed. It may also allow time for some vital other activities (resting; reading; helping out a family member; relaxing; exercising; gardening; cooking; helping out a neighbour; staying in touch with friends (at a distance of course); creating; playing games; tidying).
2. When we start to set work for you again on Monday 20th April, we will do so using Google Classroom and the following method:
 - Students will be set weekly tasks in the form of one assignment per subject.
 - All weekly assignments will be added to the Google Classrooms on Monday mornings at 8.30am. The deadline for all tasks will be 8am the following Monday. This will allow you to plan your week in a way that best suits you.
 - Each subject assignment will give clear guidance outlining the amount of time that should be allocated to it. This will correspond to the school timetable.
 - Teachers will clearly label the tasks that will be marked so students know when they will receive feedback. Work to be marked should be 'turned in' on the google classroom using Google Docs or Google Slides. The frequency of marking and feedback will continue in line with the school policy.
3. We have set up an email address that is solely for questions about education at home educationathome@hccs.info This can be used to ask questions about your learning that are related to more than one individual assignment. For questions about specific assignments, use the message function within Google Classroom and your teacher will get back to you.

Year 11 and 13 students

Currently, we know that the summer exam season for years 11 and 13 have been cancelled and that a calculated grade process will take its place. Details of this are copied from the Gov.uk below for your information with a link for further information should you require it.

“The calculated grade process will take into account a range of evidence including, for example, non-exam assessment and mock results, and the approach will be standardised between schools and colleges. Ofqual is working urgently with the exam boards to set out proposals for how this process will work and will be talking to teachers’ representatives before finalising an approach, to ensure that the approach taken is as fair as possible. The calculated grade will take into account teachers’ assessment of the likely grade as well as other factors such as prior attainment.”

More information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020/>

There is a great deal of rumour and speculation about how grades will be awarded but currently this is all that it is. We do not know precisely what data we will be asked to provide to the DfE or what the process of awarding grades will be. We know your children well and whatever assessment we are asked to make will be done objectively, fairly and professionally. Be assured that we already have a great deal of data and information about each student including teacher assessments, Interims, mock exams, completed and uncompleted coursework. This means that we have a rich bank of evidence to draw on when it is made clear what we need to provide. However, for some examination courses, the full content has not yet been delivered in all subjects. Teachers will continue to set work for year 11 and year 13 students so that they can complete their courses from home. The completion of these GCSE and A-level courses will provide the basis for the next step in learners’ educational journey, as well as providing focus and intellectual stimulation at a time when more time than normal is being spent at home.

Tips for managing workload and wellbeing at home:

1. Set up a daily, varied, manageable routine that includes literacy and numeracy. For example, a day *could* look like this:
 - Some early morning physical activity then breakfast and a conversation about the day
 - Two learning sessions of 45 minutes split with a short break in between.
 - Some quiet reading time, a (socially distanced) walk, talking to friends and sharing what they’re learning and doing
 - A further two 45 minute sessions or three 30 minute sessions focused around learning followed by a conversation on the positives of what has been achieved, what has gone well and what might need a revisit the day after.

2. This is not 'normal' school so adjust the length of learning activities and the shape of the day accordingly. We are not going to sanction students for doing their best and we are aware of the need to adjust how we give feedback and assess learning and progress.
3. Don't put off all the "hard" stuff or the things you don't like as much until later. Tackle the tough stuff first and then be proud of what you have achieved.
4. Support each other. Face to face contact is very important so that we do not feel alone. Using free apps such as google meet or zoom is easy and allows students to chat, 'meet up' and even create study groups where they can all study the same thing at the same time. It also allows parents and carers to be connected, to swap ideas and to share success.
5. Take regular breaks.
6. Share your successes. Photograph work and tweet the school; share on the classroom stream; whatsapp your mates; Facetime your relatives and tell them what you are learning about
7. Don't feel guilty if you don't get all of your activities done. Be realistic. Do your best and make yourself proud.
8. Keep smiling
9. Stay in touch with your friends, colleagues and teachers
10. Remember that we are proud to have you as part of our community! Be proud of yourself too!