



SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

BUCKINGHAM ROAD
WINSLOW
MK18 3GH
(01296) 711853

WEB: WWW.SIRTHOMASFREMANTLE.ORG

15th January 2021

Dear parents and carers,

Re: Headteacher's Update

I hope you receive this letter in good health and managing to find some respite from everything that you are trying to juggle currently. Whether your children are older or younger, they bring different challenges that require significant attention and guidance. From my perspective, I am really pleased with the manner in which students and staff have approached teaching and learning in this current lockdown. In the lessons I have seen and taught, I have been blown away by the level of interaction and commitment from the students; their politeness and gratitude at the end of each lesson is absolutely phenomenal.

We hope that having a greater structure in place with live lessons will help our young people to continue their connection with school and their teachers. In order to support students and families and avoid feeling overwhelmed with lessons or learning, we have made some small amendments to the timetables. To help reduce some screen time, we have decided to remove core PE as a live lesson and PSHCE for most years. Core PE will still set activities at the beginning of each week that students can complete as an alternative to sitting staring at a screen all day. This should give the students around 4 fewer hours on line during their working week. Students are working hard to maintain their normal timetable and to ensure that they don't burn out; we have therefore asked teachers not to set homework. Again, we feel that this reduces time students spend on their devices. Whilst our provision largely follows the regular timetable, students still need to build in activities that enhance life skills. Helping to cook dinner one evening, tending to garden, baking, keeping fit or making something will all help with routine and keep your child occupied outside of lesson times.

If you are finding that your child is becoming overwhelmed, can I ask that you let their form tutor know. School will understand if a student needs some time away from the computer, and all lessons are recorded and can be accessed at any time. We fully recognise the importance of maintaining one's mental health as well as academic studies. There is no issue if you decide that your child needs to have some space away from a screen if it helps with their mental health. All we ask is that you let us know, so we know who we can expect in our live lessons and know to not add any additional stress.

We still await further guidance from the Government regarding the finer detail of the exams process this academic year. We have been so impressed with the engagement from Year 11 and Year 13 despite the lack of clarity that exists around exams. We will continue to push on with the programmes of study and build in opportunities for students to show their abilities and hard work. Once the information filters down, we will in turn clarify the plans.



I will continue to send regular updates and keep you informed of school news. In the meantime, you are doing a fantastic job as parents! Remember: we are not asking you to suddenly become experts in English or Maths, French or History; keeping your child motivated and secure during these times is challenging enough, and we thank you for the support and kindness you have shown us during this time, and look forward to when we have a full school again.

Yours faithfully,

Neale Pledger
Headteacher

