

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Student in Year 5, Year 7 & Year 8

As I outlined in last week's Newsletter, with regret your children will continue learning from home after half term. I wanted to firstly encourage you to read the model for Year 6, which is the model we will use if the Government advises us that Year 5 will return in July. IE one teacher per day for one subject with 15 students. Secondly, I would like to reassure you about what will continue for your child's learning.

What have we been praised for?

We are really pleased to inform you that we have been recognised as a 'model of good practice' for Herts County for the online and remote learning that we have implemented for Edwinstree students. Whilst we know the joy of the Monday morning download and torrent of notifications is not pleasant, as we try to operate a virtual school teaching programme, the quality of the work and the efforts your family are making to complete the work, is positive and strong. Where quizzes and assessments are completed, we can see students are making progress.

Will staff be able to plan this work in the future if they are now teaching?

In order to make sure that our commitment to provide you with quality learning continues, we have planned a programme for Year 6 that does not devour all our teacher's time. This has not been easy, as we have less teachers and we now have more classes to teach. However we have made sure that the return of year 6 has not disrupted each member of staff time to plan for the outline learning for other year groups. This time has been protected.

What about feedback to students through comments in show my homework – my children find these really helpful – can you still do these?

We will need to reorganise our times to talk and feedback to students as our timetables have changed and we will publish an updated version, but this will not be until after half term.

As a Year 5 parent I have looked at the Year 6 timetable, if the Government says that you need to bring back Year 5's is this what it will look like? In for four days with one teacher a day.

Unfortunately, we do not have the classrooms to offer Year 5, Year 6 and students of keyworker and vulnerable students lessons at the same time, on the same day. We just don't have the space. Whichever model we put together, it is most likely to follow the one teacher, one day, with specialist teachers teaching Year 5, but the days offered are likely to be less in the first instance and or shared. We will take half term and the first week after, to really think this through and to find an equitable solution for both Year groups. We also want to see how this model pans out for Year 6 in the first two weeks. Is it going to do what we need it to do, teach the students and move their learning forward?

I am parent of a Year 7 and 8 student, when Year 5 return will you still give me quality work?

Yes absolutely, your children are learning at home and learning well, with the rare exception. We do not intend to alter our planning and commit to keeping the level and quality of work in operation next term.

Do you have any ideas about September?

If this current situation continues into the next academic year, we are clear that our current Year 7 who will transfer to Year 8 in September, will need to be a priority, to reboot their in school learning as they will have had the longest time out of school, if Year 5 return.

What about Year 8 transition? My child is becoming increasingly anxious, why don't they get to say goodbye?

We are exceptionally sad that we may not get an opportunity for our Year 8 to have a formal celebration of their time at Edwinstree, but we commit to ensuring that in the next school year, we will offer you and your child a time to celebrate, say goodbye and thank you. Unfortunately, this will be dictated to by the Coronavirus! In the meantime, Mr Galanides as Head of Year 8, will be organising the hoodies and mementos that would normally take place at this time of year. He will be in touch with students separately.

We are in the process of completing the data transfer of information to Freman College and Edwinstree and Freman will meet to discuss all students. Our SENCOs have been discussing our most vulnerable and we are encouraging opportunities to be found for the most vulnerable to meet prior to September. We hope to have more detail from after half term. Please continue to support your child to make sure they do not lose their momentum next half term. They are working towards their Year 9 curriculum and it is really important that they complete the work for the year. We are so proud of their efforts so far.

We will continue to keep you updated as much as we can during these challenging times. Thank you for your continued support

Yours sincerely

Jo Gant
Headteacher

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