



Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School

Principal: Mr E Hodges



Friday 19th June 2020

Dear Parent / Guardian

As we move towards the end of our first week of extended provision, I felt I should write to you and share our progress so far. The week has gone very smoothly and pupils should be congratulated on how well they have adapted to the new normal. They have followed the guidance they have been given very well and have been able to attend as safely as possible. We have had some good feedback about how useful they have found the sessions, and already a new routine is well on the way to being established.

Attendance of Year 10 and 12 has been superb. For Year 10 face-to-face teaching we have had well over 80% of those pupils invited to attend actually come in, and for Year 12 it has been over 90% for their subject days. It has been so high that we've had to adapt our plans slightly with Year 12 to ensure we do not exceed the government's limit of 25% of the cohort in school on any one day. For Year 10 and 12 we are trying to balance very carefully the work that they need to catch up on having been in school for a day, with the value of a whole day's tuition. We will continue to review and adapt this.

Whilst some face-to-face teaching has taken place for Year 10 and 12, we have also expanded our support provision for Years 7-9. This is also very well attended by pupils who need it most and we will be looking to expand this in coming weeks.

We have also worked hard in the last two weeks to deliver a range of 'live' lessons. This was something that parents were very clear they would like in the parental surveys we have undertaken. These are largely working well, with pupils adapting quickly to the new expectations and ways of working. We are told that some new aspects to Google Meet are on the way which will make these even better. One of the things that is apparent from live lessons is that trying to run them period 1 is very difficult due to extremely low attendance. From period 2 onwards attendance is excellent, but this is not the case for period 1. This creates two concerns that I would ask for parents' support with. Firstly, we would expect pupils to attend live lessons unless there is a good reason (probably technological) why they cannot, and I would ask parents to reinforce this expectation. Secondly, it raises a concern about the routines some pupils are in at home. As a parent of teenage children I appreciate some of the challenges this brings, but I would like to remind parents of some of the points that were made at the start of lock down. It is very important to try and maintain normal routines as far as possible. This means during the week pupils should be going to bed at a reasonable time, getting up at a sensible time and working during the day. The best case scenario is for them to follow their normal timetable at home. This will help differentiate between weekdays and weekends, and also support them in their return to school when this happens.

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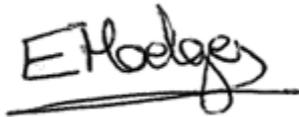
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Lastly I would remind pupils and parents that there is no Founder's Day this year and that Monday 6th July is a 'normal' day, or at least as normal as things are at present. In addition, whilst there will be no physical prize giving evening, we will still be awarding prizes this year and letters will go out to the winners shortly.

Thank you as always for your ongoing support, it is very much appreciated. We are looking to run the parental survey again soon and will let you know when it is available so that we can gain your feedback.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. Hodges". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mr E Hodges
Headteacher