



Monday 23rd March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Headteacher's Update

During this unusual time I will make a point of remaining in regular contact with you all so that we maintain our sense of community cohesion.

I have also asked three colleagues to update you on specific aspects of their work:

- Mrs Fyfe: Remote Teaching and Learning
- Mr Whitehouse: Exams and Student Performance
- Mrs Panesar: IT Systems

Their updates will follow my letter (page 2 of this document).

With the vast majority of students now working from home, today has been the first test of our arrangements for remote learning. Unfortunately, we are not alone in this endeavour and many of the nation's key websites have struggled with the increase in demand. Show My Homework has been slow and subject to crashing caused, no doubt, by the dramatic increase in load. This has prevented some of our teachers from uploading work and students from accessing work. I am sure that as things normalise and extra capacity is built into the system we will get to an effective provision over the coming days. I am also aware that MyMaths and Doodle have been slow today. Please bear with us during this unprecedented time. Some teachers will email students directly today until Show My Homework is running effectively, but they will then add tasks to Show My Homework in the future. I do appreciate your support with remote learning, I recognise that this isn't easy for any of us.

We will continue to post regularly on Facebook (I have set the goal of adding something constructive at least once a day). I would like to draw your attention to our daily 'Creation Station' – this is a creative challenge open to all students (and staff and parents!). A new challenge will be set each day (see <https://tinyurl.com/emmbrookcs1> for today's challenge). There will be prizes!

Finally, I'd like to reassure our Year 11 and 13 students that we will continue to work with you all to ensure that you are not disadvantaged by developments. For Year 11 students who are planning to study in our Sixth Form next year we will be honouring all of our commitments; a new programme of A-level preparation activities will be launching in the near future.

Best wishes,

Nick McSweeney
Headteacher



Mrs Fyfe (Assistant Headteacher) - Remote Teaching & Learning

With school closures announced for the majority of our students and exams for Year 11 and 13 cancelled, we are teaching in unprecedented times. We do not know for sure how long the current status quo will remain but please rest assured that your child's teachers have been working hard to prepare resources which will support all students with their learning from home.

We are aware that the students may be absent from school for a significant period of time and whilst remote learning is no real substitute for our classroom teaching, we will support students as much as possible to keep their engagement levels high, maintain teacher / student relationships and provide opportunities for real learning.

Staff have been busy uploading resources to the school's Show My Homework site; this will be the primary on-line tool which students must access to receive their teacher's instructions. Staff will also be in contact with your child via their school email account, providing them with support, feedback and maintaining communication during this very unusual time in their learning journey.

It is more important than ever, as parents or carers, that you support us with your child's learning and ensure that they have space to work and that they are encouraged with a daily routine to engage with the learning resources on offer.

I would also urge you to take this opportunity to encourage your child to read widely as this has proven to be the most significant factor to improving learning in all subjects. At this time Audible are also offering FREE stories for students to access during the school closure <https://stories.audible.com/start-listen>

If you have any queries regarding the provision of learning for your child during this time, then please feel free to contact me directly: lfyfe@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk and I will be more than happy to assist you.

Mrs Panesar (Director of Maths & Science) – IT Access

While the school is closed students will need access to two main IT systems.

ShowMyHomework:

If a student has forgotten their password we do not have access to passwords and cannot send them to students/parents. The best course of action would be to click forgotten password and an email will be sent to the email address that your child registered with. Often this will be their school email but sometimes students may have signed up with their personal email accounts. If a new PIN is required then please do email



lpansar@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk and this will be provided. A new PIN is only required if your child is trying to download the app for the first time or has not yet signed up. While you wait for access all homework can be accessed through this link: <https://www.satchelone.com/calendar/school?all=true>

Office 365 Email and Sharepoint:

Included within the office 365 package is student email and access to Sharepoint and Teams. Your child may be set work on ShowmyHomework which references these. To gain access please go to: <https://www.office.com/?auth=2> and sign in using your normal login (as you would for a school computer) and add @emmbrook.org to the end. For example if your login is JU18SmithJo then your office 365 login and your email address is JU18SmithJo@emmbrook.org. Your password is also the **same password that you use for the school computers**. If you need this to be reset then please email sward@emmbrook.wokingham.sch.uk.

Please do bear with us at this busy time. We are finding that access to online services can be slow and sometimes unavailable. We cannot control this but will always do our best to help.

Mr Whitehouse (Assistant Headteacher) – Exams and Student Performance

As part of the ongoing assessment process it is vital that we ensure that students are keeping up with their work and continue to submit work and, where possible, respond to feedback.

I would like to reassure you that the school will be working closely with teachers and Curriculum Leaders to ensure that student work and progress continues. If staff are worried about the quantity of work or quality of work then they will flag this up. The school will then be in contact with you to discuss any further support that might be needed. If you have any concerns about work or progress, please do not hesitate to contact either the classroom teacher, Curriculum Leader or Head of Year.

I will be writing to Year 11 and 13 students with more details about the 2020 exams as and when that information is published by the Department for Education and OfQual.