

REF: GEH/tlb

Tuesday 19th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

What a start to the new term - we're in week 3 and we could not be prouder of our students and our staff. As you know, our aim has been to replicate the school day as closely as possible so that our students are motivated, focused, engaged and healthy during these unprecedented times.

It's business as 'usual' at NT with every lesson, for every student, every day, being taught via Microsoft Teams and with work also available on ClassCharts. Attendance to these online lessons has been excellent, and we'd like to thank you for all your support and encouragement in this process – we don't underestimate how hard this must be for our families and are doing everything we can to support you.

Feedback from you has been hugely positive. Thank you, too, for taking the time to write, email, or post on social media – we cannot tell you how much that means to our staff and what a motivation it is to read that this provision is making a difference. Something that has been mentioned in feedback is the amount of work that is being set and how difficult it can be to complete work on time. We've listened to this and have put the following in place, so you should see a difference to any workload issues in the next few days:

Introducing 'Reflection and Catch-up' lessons: Once every 6 – 8 lessons, staff (having registered your child online as normal) will then allow students the whole hour to independently catchup and reflect on any work. It is hoped that offering this screen-free opportunity across their timetable will allow them some space to catch-up and reflect where needed.

20 – 30 minute teaching episodes: We have ensured that most teaching should take no more than 30 minutes and that any tasks set after this time can be completed within the hour.

Homework / Independent Study: We are asking teachers to be mindful of the amount of homework that is set on top of a busy school day. As such, if your child is set homework, separate to lesson tasks, please know that it is because it is genuinely needed and will complement their learning.

Form time: Well-being and pastoral support: We have now opened form time on Teams for students to meet their form friends on Mondays and Thursdays and ask their form tutor anything that may be worrying them; anything they'd like support in; or anything they may like to share. This 10-minute session is designed to be a relaxed and informal time to chat and catch-up!

We cannot wait to see your children, safely back in the building, and as soon as we know what is expected of us all, we will communicate our plans to you. This is also true of examinations this summer.

For examination year groups:

How students will be awarded their grades this year is currently out for consultation. It is envisaged that this process will take the government well into February, but when we know more, we will explain the process, and what this will mean for your child, as soon as possible. If your child is in an examination class, you may like to contribute to the survey:

[Consultation on how GCSE, AS and A level grades should be awarded in summer 2021 \(smartsurvey.co.uk\)](https://smartsurvey.co.uk)

For now, please know that it is likely students will sit internal assessments when they are back in the building. As such, it is vital they engage with their lessons online and start 'SORTing' their revision – something teachers will support them with this term.

Finally, we'd like to reiterate, once again, a huge thank you for all you are doing in supporting your child, and us, as we navigate all things remote learning this term!

We hope you all stay safe and look after each other,

Best wishes



MS G HARRIES
Deputy Headteacher
Responsible for Teaching and Learning