

Friday 23rd October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Reference: Years 7 to 11

The Department for Education's 'The Coronavirus Act 2020 Provision of Remote Education (England) Temporary Continuity Direction' makes it clear that schools have a duty to provide remote education for state-funded, school-age children (Year 11 and below) unable to attend school due to coronavirus. The Direction will have effect until the end of the current school year (unless it is revoked by a further Direction).

Since the start of the pandemic, The Priory Academy LSST has been continuing to develop ways in which we can deliver lessons to our students if they are not in school. Due to changes in national guidance, we can once again adapt our current systems to ensure that remote learning is easier for staff and students in the months ahead. Although work will continue to be set primarily through our SharePoint platform, our range of strategies is developing all the time.

One particular element of remote learning that may, on occasion, be used is Microsoft Teams. This platform allows staff to engage directly with pupils, including live lessons and/or recorded lessons for pupils to access. As part of our remote education offer, if your child is unable to attend school they may be asked to engage with the following:

- **Accessing recorded lessons.**
A teacher will film the lesson as it is delivered and will then upload it to Microsoft Stream so that pupils at home can watch the lesson after it has taken place. Support will then be provided to pupils at home to ensure that they have understood the lesson content.
- **Virtual lessons through 'Live events' in Teams.**
Pupils at home will be able to 'join' a lesson and see and hear the teacher but they will not be able to speak to the teacher. They can enter any questions they have into a 'Q & A forum'. The teacher can respond to their questions either verbally or by writing a response in the forum. Pupils at home are not visible to the teacher in this format, nor can they see other pupils taking part from home.
- **Virtual lessons through 'Teams meetings' where the pupils at home 'join' a lesson as it occurs.**
The pupils at home will be able to see and hear the teacher as well as speak to the teacher. Pupils joining from home will be able to see each other unless they switch off their cameras. Pupils who are physically

in the classroom will not be on camera, nor will they be able to see directly the pupils joining from home (although they will be able to hear them). The teacher will be able to view pupils at home if they have their cameras switched on but please be aware that the teacher will not be able to monitor the camera feed at all times.

This type of virtual lesson may be recorded. A copy of the recording will be saved to Microsoft Stream, accessible only by the Academy and the System Administrator. A recording is made in the event that access is needed to the lesson following its delivery. All recordings will be kept until the end of this academic year. If it is necessary for a recording to be kept for any longer than this time period, the parents/carers of the students in the recording will be notified.

These are unprecedented times for everyone and we appreciate that remote learning will bring complications of its own to the pupil and their family. Therefore, we will endeavour to support families as much as possible by:

- Scheduling 'Teams meetings' and 'Live events' during the Academy day (this may include sessions after school if we normally run these with students).
- Notifying parents/carers of what sites their children are being asked to use and with which Academy staff they will be interacting.
- Providing support, where possible, for pupils without IT access at home.

If your child is joining from home, please can I ask for your support with the following:

- Pupils must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household who may accidentally be visible on the camera.
- Any computers/devices used should be in appropriate areas, for example, somewhere quiet; and where possible be against a neutral background (nothing which may be deemed offensive or inappropriate).
- Pupils should respect and follow the usual school guidelines related to learning and behaviour.
- Family members should behave in a way that is respectful and courteous of all those involved in the lesson and understand that they must not become part of the lesson.
- Ensuring you and your child are familiar with and have read the IT Acceptable Use policy.
- The teacher reserves the right to end the virtual session at any time and any issues will be followed up by Academy staff.

I would also like to take this opportunity to inform parents/carers that the Trust does not permit them or pupils to record or take photographs of the virtual lessons. I am sure you will appreciate that this is to safeguard all parties involved in the lessons.

Please be aware that pupils will only ever be asked to join virtual events through Teams – no other system will be used and staff will always use their 'Priory' log-ins.

In the event that you have any concerns about your child's welfare, or the welfare of any other child, please contact Mr J Nuttall, Designated Safeguarding Lead on JNuttall@prioryacademies.co.uk.

If you have any concerns about your child taking part in any of the virtual events described above, please do not hesitate to contact me at the Academy. Please be aware that for some students, the above sessions may be running from the start of next module.

Yours faithfully

Mr G Sleight

Assistant Headteacher