



STOCKPORT SCHOOL

Headteacher Mr I. R. Irwin BA (Hons), MSc, NPOH

12th October 2020

Dear parents and carers,

Thank you for your responses to the survey and letters sent out in recent weeks about independent learning, homework and remote learning. We have also asked some students for their views. This is to help us to continue planning for how we will continue to educate students if they need to self-isolate or in case there are any school closures in the future (which we hope there will not be).

We have been making plans since last year and have refined these in response to the ideas of you, the students and the staff. The first thing to say is that we will offer at least what the Department for Education has asked us to, and we will work hard to go further to meet the needs of our school community. You may hear things about what other schools are doing and wonder why we are sometimes working differently. This is in response to what our students need and what we have found works.

You have said...	We will...
You would like students to have work to be set on paper as well as online.	We have asked all staff to produce booklets for their subject for every year group that should be given out in the coming weeks. This would contain all the core learning for that unit and so any student without access to a device would still be able to continue their education.
That some of you would like devices to be loaned to students who are sharing or have no access at home	We include, below, a possible route for you to apply to Stockport Council for the loan of a device. We are also applying to the Department for Education for more devices to loan to students in this position. This is by no means a certain process. We are unlikely to receive all of the devices that we request. In this circumstance, devices would be loaned in order of priority, taking into account whether there is a device in the household at all, whether the family is on a low income, whether the students has Special Educational Needs or a disability and what year group the student is in. We cannot guarantee the loan of a device to anyone and so it may be worth considering buying a cheap tablet or similar device if you can financially afford to do so.
That you would like us to offer live teaching if there is another school closure	While we are aware that some schools used this method during lockdown, we are also aware that attendance was often poor. This is because of the problem mentioned above: not all students have access to devices. If we moved exclusively to this method of remote teaching, this would risk disadvantaging students without devices or internet access. It is also not practical if there is a full lockdown as many teachers have young children and could not teach online for hours at a time without interruption. We also feel that our Firefly work and work set on other platforms such as Hegarty, GCSEPod, Century and Memrise is good for promoting students' independence. We think that combining online learning with booklets/ paper learning is better for students' engagement and eyesight! However, we are listening to your feedback and currently trialling Microsoft Teams live teaching by teachers who are at home self-isolating. We are considering moving to a small amount of online teaching in some subjects if there is a full lockdown. We have also trained all staff to make short, recorded videos so that students can hear their teacher explain key ideas.
You would like there to be more interaction with teachers.	We agree that it is really important that students are able to talk to their teachers if they are stuck and we will encourage staff to phone students where necessary (via Microsoft Teams) if there was a full lockdown. We are also looking at how we can increase pastoral contact for all students if schools close again, although it was pleasing to see the number of positive comments about the support that

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	some of your children with specific needs received. Each student would have some regular pastoral contact in the circumstance of another school closure or lockdown.
You would like more information about the online platforms that we use.	You will find, with this letter, a booklet created for your use at home. Your child will also be given a paper copy this week or next week. It can be used now, to help you support your child with their homework. It gives information about Firefly, Hegarty, GCSEPod, Memrise, Seneca, Century, Microsoft Teams and more. It also has spaces for your child to put their log-in details and passwords for each platform. This will also go on the school website. We hope that you find this helpful.

If you're interested in borrowing a laptop or tablet, please call the Stockport Council DigiKnow Helpline on 07537 127095. The standard loan period is one month for a tablet and three months for a laptop. If you **do** manage to borrow a device and you have already let school know that you required one, please let me know at r.holt@stockport.stockport.sch.uk so that I am aware that one from school is no longer needed. Please note that borrowing from the council is likely to get you a device quicker than us waiting for the Department for Education devices.

If you would like to improve your computer skills so you can support your child's learning on-line, this short course is for you.

The course covers a number of topics, including:

- Using computers (identifying and solving basic technical problems)
- Communicating online
- How to use online software e.g. Microsoft Teams/Zoom
- Staying safe on-line
- Useful websites to help support learning

Sessions are delivered by an experienced tutor in a very supportive environment.

Venue: Stockport College

Course Length: 5 weeks

Date/Time: Thursday 5th November to 3rd December

Cost: There is no charge but you are expected to attend all five sessions. Social distancing will be in place and learners will need to follow appropriate health & safety guidelines as advised at enrolment.

For further information, please call 0161 886 7443 or email community@tcg.ac.uk .

If your child has issues with using the internet at home, the school large LRC is open every day from 8.15am, at break, at lunch and after school for students to use computers or work at tables on these days (where year groups will be kept in separate zones):

Year 7/11: Monday Year 8/10: Tuesday Year 9/7: Wednesday Year 10/8: Thursday Year 11/9: Friday

This means that every student in the school is able to complete online homework while school remains open, regardless of what they have access to at home. Some departments, like maths, English and science, also offer homework sessions after school.

The situation is continually changing and we will continue to take your views into account, as well as those of students. Thank you again for your feedback and support.



Miss Holt

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