

Headteacher's Blog: 24th April

Oak National Academy and other developments to support learning at home

I hope that you and your family managed to enjoy some of the sunshine over the Easter break. I am writing today with an update on what we are putting in place to support your child whilst they work at home. Before I go any further, you may have seen a letter from our CEO Richard Gill; we recognise the challenges that this unprecedented time has brought and I want to echo the sentiment in this letter that your child, and your family's, well-being is the most important thing. Gaps in learning can be plugged and it is our job as educators to do this. Having said this, there are parents and carers who are asking for more structure in our offer for home education and so we are making some changes from next week.

Year 7, 8, 9

Over the Easter holidays, the government commissioned forty excellent teachers from across the country to create some online lessons for students up to Year 10, called the Oak National Academy. These resources provide a good opportunity for students to follow lessons guided by a teacher who has recorded a narration with instructions over the tasks and quizzes to monitor what has been learnt. We are going to be using these resources with our students to set work for English, Maths, Science, Spanish or French, History and Geography.

The lessons will be timetabled during the day with 3 sessions on offer for each year group every day. Alongside the timetable, we plan to have available a subject teacher who can be contacted using Microsoft Teams during the hour lesson, to deal with any questions or misconceptions the students may have. We feel this will support our students in their learning and perhaps ease any pressure from parents/carers who may not have the necessary answers. There is no expectation that work done during these sessions will be returned to school for marking, as any queries can be dealt in the session by the on duty subject specialist.

A student guide to using Oak National lessons can be found attached.

For all other subjects in Year 7, 8 and 9 staff will continue to set revision based activities and projects.

Year 10

In recognition that our Year 10 students will need to continue with their GCSE content, we have asked subjects to each set a unit of work to span a 3 week period. The unit of work may be a new topic or it could be consolidation of work already covered. The methods used for teaching this unit should include an opportunity to return work to students with specific teacher feedback. The work will be sent in the week beginning 27th April.

For any students who will not be able to access on line resources please contact the school as we will have packs of work available to be sent out.

At this stage we are now expecting Year 10 students, when they are well and able, to be engaging with the lessons and activities being provided. Work set should be returned via school email, through Microsoft Teams, for feedback. There will be a specific instruction sheet for Year 10 students coming out next week about how to return their work.

Year 11

A separate letter has been sent to Year 11 families.

Year 12

Each subject and class are finding their own ways of what works best for them and this process will continue. If parents have any questions please contact the class teacher in the first instance.

Student email.

It is vital that students, including Year 12, are using their Coleshill email addresses for all school communication, as I set out in my in last blog. This is because all of our activity is now going through Microsoft 365. All students have already been issued with an e mail and a password. If your child has forgotten their e mail or password they can email passwords@thecoleshillschool.org with their FULL NAME and year group.

Work packs for students

We understand that it may not be possible for all students to access the online resources and therefore we are providing work packs that can be sent out from school for Year 7, 8 and 9. The work packs will contain enough work for around a fortnight and once this is completed, you can request further work packs for your child. The school reception is manned all day from 8:30am to 3:30pm and you can make any requests here or by contacting your Year Leader via email.

As ever, please do contact us at school if you need us. We are here for you every day. Stay safe.

Ian Smith-Childs
Headteacher