



The Oak-Tree Group of Schools

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Group Education Principal

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17 April 2020

Dear Parents

Re: Summer Term Arrangements for Education and Learning

It is three weeks since I last wrote to you about our plans for learning during the Coronavirus pandemic and temporary closure of schools. Since that time, I know that a number of our families have been directly affected by the virus, and that the reality of the seriousness of the situation is in everyone's mind.

As we start a new term, albeit in a very different way and without being together in school, I hope that you and your children are looking forward to what will be happening. In this letter I hope to give you some more details about what the learning will look like, to provide some advice about staying safe online and to suggest some websites and apps which might be useful.

Lessons and Learning this Term

Teachers will start setting the daily work for the children from Tuesday 21 April. As you know, work will be uploaded onto whichever portal your school is using. This is the Engage portal for Coopersale Hall and Oaklands, and the Show My Homework portal for Braeside and Normanhurst.

At Coopersale Hall and Oaklands, please continue to email your completed work to the teacher's direct email address. At Braeside and Normanhurst, please continue to upload completed work onto Show My Homework.

Please contact your class teacher or Head as soon as possible if you are unable to access the portals and the work.

On Tuesday 21 April all pupils will have a 'live' 'Zoom' meeting with their class teacher to start the term and to give the children a chance to see each other and to have some pastoral time together.

By Wednesday, we will be starting the 'live lessons' online. You will see when these are in the timetables being sent out from school. Our aim is that every pupil will have a daily form time and at least one live lesson a day, as well as having their activities and assignments to complete. Assemblies have been planned, as have class catch-ups and 'show and tell'.

The teachers will send an invitation for each Zoom lesson via the portal. There will be a link you click on, which will take you directly to the 'meeting'. All Zoom meetings are set up with a code and a password, which you may need to enter to join the meeting. This is part of the security set-up.

Not all of the teaching and learning will be done using Zoom. There will be a range of activities and applications used by teachers to support the learning, including links to websites and other online resources. A Zoom lesson will typically last up to 30 minutes, so that pupils have time to complete the follow-on work independently. If you do need to give support to younger children, please let the teacher know, so that we are aware.



Braeside School

130 High Road, Buckhurst Hill
Essex IG9 5SD
020 8504 1133

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Company no: 0783067



Coopersale Hall School

Flux's Lane, Epping
Essex CM16 7PE
01992 577133

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Company no: 3524644



Normanhurst School

68-74 Station Road
North Chingford E4 7BA
020 8529 4307

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Company no: 9380841



Oaklands School

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Older junior pupils may have Zoom lessons in Maths, English, Science or other subjects; the younger children will have English or Maths, and perhaps have a story time with their teacher as well.

There are timetables in place for the daily learning, which will be shared with you. The teachers will try to ensure there are no clashes between Zoom lessons where you have more than one child in school, but it is possible that two different lessons might be scheduled at the same time for different aged children so please let us know if we need to consider rescheduling any sessions.

Senior pupils will follow their usual weekly timetables and they will have a mixture of live lessons, and independent tasks set on Show My Homework.

We hope to record the live lessons and then upload a link onto the portal for you, so that if your child missed a Zoom lesson, they can click on a link and catch it up.

Feedback from Teachers

As we settle into the pattern of remote learning you will see that some work will take more than one lesson to complete and teachers may break down an assignment into a number of stages before a final piece is created for marking. This is similar to how learning takes place in class, and teachers will mark and give feedback once the task is complete.

Other feedback may be given verbally in a Zoom meeting, when the teachers can explain work to pupils, and pupils can have the opportunity to improve together, just as we would do in class.

Please send all completed work back to the teachers as soon as possible, so they have time to look at it.

If you would like to discuss any aspects of the work with teachers, please email them at their usual email address. They will respond as quickly as they can, but this may not be immediately. They are keen to get back to you as soon as possible.

If your Child is Unwell or if you Opt not to Complete the Work

Please let the class teacher know if your child is unwell and therefore unable to do the set work. We are encouraging the children to keep up with their learning, but we do appreciate that there may be times when this is not possible. Please let us know if this is the case, so that we can support.

A Daily Routine

All pupils will benefit from a routine while they are at home. If possible encourage them to have a set place to work each day, which they tidy away when the work is finished. Include breaks, exercise, and relaxation time in the routine. All of this is important for wellbeing. Teachers will also be encouraging the children to read, or do practical activities to provide balance to the day.

The Oak-Tree Safeguarding Policy and Online Safety

The school has updated its safeguarding policies in light of the Coronavirus pandemic and has produced an addendum to the current policy, which takes into account safeguarding the children through the school closure, and provides information about what we are doing to keep the children safe online. Please read the policy by clicking on the link below:



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<https://www.oaktreeschools.co.uk/oaktree-content/uploads/2020/04/OTG-Safeguarding-Policy-Addendum-During-Covid19-2019-2020.pdf>

Whenever your child is having a Zoom lesson, whether as part of a group or 1:1, we suggest that pupils are in an open place, dressed for the day, not in their bedrooms and that parents are around.

For pupils in Year 6 and above, the following online safety advice is helpful:

Explore together: Ask your child to show you their favourite websites and apps and what they do on them. Listen, show interest and encourage them to teach you the basics of the site or app.

Talk about online safety little and often: Young people are likely to want to explore new apps and websites while they are at home, whether that's for learning or for fun. Take this opportunity to talk to them about how to stay safe on these new services, and in general. Ask if anything ever worries them while they're online. Make sure they know that if they ever feel worried, they can get help by talking to you or another adult they trust.

Help your child identify trusted adults who can help them if they are worried: This includes you and other adults at home, as well as adults from wider family, school or other support services who they are able to contact at this time.

Be non-judgemental: Explain that you would never blame them for anything that might happen online, and you will always give them calm, loving support.

Talk about how their online actions can affect others: If your child is engaging with others online, remind them to consider how someone else might feel before they post or share something. If they are considering sharing a photo/video of somebody else, they should always ask permission first.

Parental controls: Make use of the parental controls available on your home broadband and any internet enabled device in your home. You can find out more about how to use parental controls by visiting your broadband provider's website.

Make sure they know about CEOP: Young people can report a concern about grooming or sexual abuse to CEOP at www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/ and get support from a specialist Child Protection Advisor.

There are a number of helpful website parents can use for advice on internet safety:

Internet Matters – A tool showing how to set parental controls across a range of devices and websites. <http://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/interactive-guide>

NSPCC Net Aware – Provides reviews and guidance on the most popular social networks, apps and games that children use. <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

Childnet – Information and advice for parents and carers on supporting people online. <https://www.childnet.com/resources/supporting-young-people-online>

1:1 Learning Support Lessons

It will be more difficult to provide the 1:1 learning support lessons while school is closed. You will see, therefore, that these have not been invoiced for the first half-term. The teachers and learning support team will be liaising throughout the closure and will be supporting the remote learning with the differentiated work we are sending home.

Please do let your class teacher or the SENDCo know if you think your child is struggling to access the work at home, or is not trying the work independently.

Supporting Children

There are a number of publications to support younger children through the Coronavirus pandemic, which parents might find helpful:



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Childline: <https://childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/anxiety-stress-panic/worries-about-the-world/coronavirus>

Alex Scheffler: <https://nosycrowcoronavirus.s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/Coronavirus-ABookForChildren.pdf>

There is also a useful wellbeing website to help senior pupils through this period of social distancing and shielding:
<https://riseabove.org.uk/>

We will be setting meaningful, relevant and challenging work for pupils of all ages through the closure, which means they will be learning in line with our aims and objectives for this stage of their education. We do not expect families to need to supplement the work, but you may be interested to see some of the education websites parents and children can access from home, if they would like to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-online-education-resources/coronavirus-covid-19-list-of-online-education-resources-for-home-education>

Year 11 Pupils at Braeside and Normanhurst

Parents will be aware that all public examinations have been cancelled this year due to the pandemic. However, GCSE results still need to be awarded to pupils. Teachers are required to look at the full range of work pupils have completed over the course, and to submit to Ofqual and the exam boards, after due consideration and a detailed ranking exercise, the grade they consider the pupil would have been most likely to achieve had the examinations taken place as usual.

It will take considerable time for teachers to do this, and I am very grateful for the work they will be doing. They will also continue to set meaningful work to bridge from school to sixth form over the course of this half-term.

There is a helpful link aimed at the students themselves to explain the process:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=VXuDOrtJY1Q&feature=youtu.be>

And a detailed publication from the Government:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/878869/Summer_2020_grades_for_GCSE_AS_A_level_EPQ_AEA_in_maths_-_guidance_for_teachers_students_parents_UPDATED_09APR2020.pdf

Closing Thoughts

We are looking forward to welcoming the pupils back for their remote learning this term. We are missing them. I hope they enjoy their interactive Zoom lessons beginning on Tuesday. Please continue to give us your feedback as the term progresses.

It remains our hope that there can be a phased return to school after the half-term break, but of course, nothing is yet confirmed and we will be guided by Government advice as we have been throughout the crisis.

If you have any questions about anything in this email, please feel free to email me at: cosborn@oaktreeschools.co.uk

With my very best wishes to you and your families as the term begins.

Yours sincerely



Claire Osborn
Group Education Principal



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