



19 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Thank you for your continued support of your child/children during this period of remote learning. I thought that I would write to you all to provide an update on how the next few weeks will look.

Remote learning (lessons learnt and expectations)

There are some key points and issues we have identified this week which we would be grateful for your support with:

- In order to hear what is being said and to join in any conversations if invited, children need to click on the 'Allow Computer Audio' link when joining a Teams meeting.
- Please encourage your child to join their timetabled sessions on time (ideally no more than 2 -3 minutes before the session is due to start). This will enable staff to 'admit all'.
- Children should only use the 'chat' facility when directed by their teacher. This facility should only be used to ask/respond to questions and to contribute to the lesson; it should not be used for general chat. Please remind your son or daughter that 'chats' are monitored and school will contact parents if any inappropriate comments are made.
- We do expect all children to follow their daily timetable and to actively engage in the activities set; however, we also realise that there will be technical difficulties and personal circumstances that may not make this possible, such as sharing of devices.
- Lessons will start 5 minutes later and end 5 minutes sooner (*50 minutes in total*). This will enable all users to have a screen break. During this time, pupils should either go to the toilet, get a drink or snack, change room or move around. This will allow them to refocus and process learning better.

Laptops to support home learning

We understand that some families are struggling with remote learning either because of a lack of a suitable device or not enough devices to support siblings working at home as well. We have been fortunate to receive a small number of laptops from the DfE this week to provide further capacity to support families. I am also hugely grateful for the number of devices that have also been donated by local families to support this initiative further. This allows us to provide the same online curriculum to both children attending school and those staying at home.

The laptops received will be distributed initially to those families who have no devices at home and/or are eligible for Pupil Premium funding. Please contact your child's tutor if you feel this would help your child so that we can prioritise support and delivery of these devices.

We have also discovered that the children can access their remote learning using gaming devices such as X Box and Play Station. Please see the instructions over the page, which explain how to do this. Please remember that if the lack of a keyboard is a problem, we may be able to help you with this, as we have a number of keyboards that we can lend out to families.



Fairlands Middle School

Masons Way, Cheddar, Somerset, BS27 3PG, Tel: (01934) 743186 Absence Line: (01934) 743908
E-Mail: office@fairlandsmiddleschool.co.uk Website: www.fairlandsmiddleschool.co.uk

Headteacher: Stefan McHale
Deputy Headteachers: Helen Heffernan and Kate Persaud
Associate Leaders: Robert Cooling and Matthew Vincent SENDCo

Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility.

If you are worried about any child please make an appointment to see either Helen Heffernan, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Robert Cooling, Felicity Grant, Sally Virgin, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads
Alternatively, you can phone NPSCC: 0808 800 5000 Somerset Direct: 0300 123 2224



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Using X Box and Play Station to access Teams

X Box

1. Plug a key board into the X Box USB slot – if you need a keyboard, contact the school, as we may be able to help
2. Go to my games and apps
3. Find Microsoft Edge and select
4. Type in: www.office.com
5. Log in using your school log in details
6. You can then access TEAMS and other key packages

Play Station

1. Identify the Play Station internet browser icon (it is WWW with dots around it)
2. Press the PS4 logo on the controller
3. Go to the library and find options for games and applications
4. Go to the applications and you will find the internet browser
5. Type in: www.office.com
6. You can then access TEAMS and other packages.

Data allowance for mobile devices

We have been informed of a Government scheme that gives increased data allowance for mobile phone users on certain networks. This is so that children and young people can access remote education if their face-to-face education is disrupted. Please email:

office@fairlandsmiddleschool.co.uk if you meet all three of the criteria required below:

- You do not have fixed broadband at home;
- You cannot afford additional data for your devices;
- Your child is experiencing disruption to their face-to-face education.

Children with access to a mobile phone on one of the following networks might be able to benefit:

EE

O2

Sky Mobile SMARTY Tesco Mobile Three

Virgin Mobile Vodafone

Alongside this, we have also been able to access a number of Vodafone SIM cards, which provide 30GB of data for 90 days. If you are able to access remote learning through a tablet or smartphone, but are not on a data contract, please contact us if one of these SIM cards would help. It should be noted that this will provide a new mobile number, but no facility for calling or messaging will be enabled.



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Free School Meal vouchers

Families whose children are eligible for free school meals (FSM) should have received supermarket gift cards. From this week onwards the electronic voucher scheme run by EdenRed, which was extremely successful in the first lockdown, will commence once again. Families should receive these vouchers by email later this week to cover this week and next.

Quick guide for remote learning and live Lessons for parents/carers:

- Live online sessions should only be accessed in a quiet area where your child can concentrate.
- Pupils should be appropriately dressed.
- Other family members should be made aware that a live lesson is taking place in this space so they can also act appropriately when present in the background.
- The camera on the child's device should be on for the whole of each session. The microphone should be muted unless the teacher asks you to answer a question.
- Each session will be recorded by the school to safeguard children and staff. No-one else should take screen shots or recordings of the session.
- No images or recordings of the session will be shared within or outside the school environment.
- Do not share any data, such as names or other information that may be heard or seen as part of the lesson.
- Normal classroom standards of behaviour are expected. Inappropriate behaviour will be addressed.
- Online lessons and live lessons are to enhance the learning and curriculum for the pupil and are not a forum for parents to feedback or to use as an opportunity for parent-teacher discussions.
- If you wish to communicate with your child's teacher, please contact the school office as you normally would do.

The parent/pupil/teacher partnership remains a vital part of ensuring successful learning for every child. I am hugely proud of the way that families are working with us to support the learning of every pupil, especially in these continued difficult circumstances. I look forward to being able to bring our whole school community back together when safe to do so.

Yours sincerely

Stefan McHale
Headteacher



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