



ParentMail
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HBK Update, Friday 22 May 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Wider reopening

We are still making plans to provide some face to face support during next half term for students in Years 10 and 12, whilst waiting for the Government announcement that is due during half term. We have been told to expect an announcement on 28 May about whether schools *should* reopen more widely next half term, in light of the most up to date information about COVID-19. As soon as we have digested any further news from the Government we will share our plans with all parents.

Home learning review

We have reviewed our provision for home learning, taking account of views expressed by students, parents and staff and we will be seeking to upgrade it next half term. To make this happen, we have just issued new guidance on remote learning to all teachers. This guidance includes advice to teachers on providing students with some feedback on their work and suggestions that will lead to greater consistency between departments. A specific concern expressed by some parents in the recent HBK lockdown survey was that there is too little interactivity between the school and their children. We absolutely understand that concern, and recently-established new routines such as tutor contact (many tutors are using Zoom meetings) and virtual assemblies are designed to address that concern, in part. In terms of subject teaching, yesterday we ran a training session for teachers on how they can use technology to facilitate home learning. This included input on how teachers could use tools such as Zoom and Loom and Microsoft PowerPoint and Teams effectively. We are confident that families will see a significant increase in this aspect of home learning next half term and, of course, this is an ongoing process that will continue to develop over time.

We intend to add FAQs to ParentMails next half term, but starting today! If you have a question that you think all or many parents would want the school to answer, please feel free to send it to communications@hinchbk.cambs.sch.uk (we cannot promise to answer every question asked as part of the whole-school ParentMail – do continue to address specific questions to specific staff as you have up to now).

FAQ 1

Why can't my child get feedback from their teacher on their Doodle work?

Doodle was not designed as a remote learning tool. It is a tool for the setting of homework, that we have had to use to set home learning tasks during this crisis (indeed, we are lucky to have it, some schools don't and have been relying on sending mountainous packs of paper documents home). Doodle is not a two-way communication tool, either, and it cannot be adapted to become one. These are significant drawbacks of Doodle as a tool for interactive home learning. That said, much of the work on Doodle has its own assessment feedback built in and much other work is designed so that it does not require teacher feedback, e.g. quizzes. We are aware that some students are printing out activities that teachers have uploaded and they have built up a large folder of completed work during lockdown; we have asked teachers to avoid uploading activities which require printing next half term, as far as possible.

All of that said, some teachers are asking for and receiving work from students (particularly in Year 12) and they are marking it and providing feedback. We have asked departments to set **all students** at least one piece of assessed work from which feedback will be given, during next half term (by, for example, setting a mini assessment and giving feedback on that).

Thank you to all of our students for their work this half term. Do take a good break, so you are ready to work hard again next half term!

Keep safe.

Very best wishes

Mark Patterson
Principal