



18th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Following the success of my loom presentation, I had hoped to give you a break from my letters. However, given the changes to our online provision which have been communicated directly to the students, I felt that I should write to make sure there is no area of uncertainty.

In the light of the decision to close schools made on Monday 4th January, we set work for all our students on Go4schools as we did in the first lockdown. On Monday 11th January we started online lessons to cover a partial timetable. We have been really pleased with the response of our students and I would like to thank the parents and carers for their support in making it possible for our students to access their learning. We now feel ready to increase the percentage of taught lessons.

From today, Monday 18th January, we will now expect all students to log on to all of their lessons on their pre-lockdown timetable. 60-70% of their lessons, depending on timetabling issues will be taught lessons and will be designated as “live” lessons. The balance of lessons will be designated as “tutorials”. In tutorial lessons teachers will register the students to monitor attendance and then students will get on with set work. Students will have the chat facility should they need to ask for help and get feedback from the teacher. Students will not be expected to sit in front of their screens for the duration of the tutorial lessons and can get on with the set work without the screen open as part of our efforts to support their mental health. Please be aware that students may not receive an invite, they just need to be ready on teams for all lessons and they will be invited at the time by the teacher.

We will continue to review our provision on a regular basis and contact any parent/carer of any child who is not accessing the learning. With this lockdown affecting schools the importance of staying in touch with learning is critical.

Our testing programme is going extremely well. I would like to thank my colleagues who have been part of the team with all the issues involved.

I said in my video message that although the exams were cancelled it was not yet clear how assessed grades would be calculated. It does seem increasingly likely that Year 11 students will be required to sit mini tests on their return to school. We do not as yet know much about the format of these tests but would urge our students to stay focused and maintain the almost 100% attendance at lessons that we saw last week.

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I would draw your attention to the information that we sent out about enrichment opportunities provided by Unity Schools Partnership, and the letter we sent out about Mobile data. Please also note, that for students entitled to Free School Meals, the government has reverted to its original provider – Edenred. Please do get in touch with your house team if you are having any issues with the vouchers.

I am proud of both my colleagues for their commitment to the transition to online learning, and our students for their perseverance and resilience in the face of some teething problems. We started online learning in a measured way and feel that this was the right decision. We are optimistic that this new commitment to 100% contact lessons will be well-received by the students and you as parents and carers.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Nick Froy', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nick Froy
Executive Headteacher at Newmarket Academy and Sybil Andrews Academy.