

23 October 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to you all for working alongside the Academy allowing our return to be a safe and purposeful one. I have been so impressed with the conduct of students as they have adapted to new routines and safety measures and I know this comes from your clear guidance within the home too. I also want to thank you for supporting your child with their online learning through Teams.

We have reached the end of a challenging half term. Thank you for the support you have given your child and the school over the past two months. We have successfully balanced the challenges of keeping pupils and staff as safe as possible during a global pandemic, whilst ensuring that high quality teaching continues. We have achieved incredible things this half term as I wanted to share some highlights with you.

- We welcomed students back with a strong pastoral system, coaching time programme and assemblies to support their safety and wellbeing.
- We have exceptional safety routines which have resulted in a calm, purposeful atmosphere around the school.
- There have been no positive Covid cases at the Academy which has meant that we were able to open fully to all students and serve the community. This reminds us how well staff and students have followed the safety measures in place.
- We ran two weeks of lesson characterised by awe and wonder to ensure that students' entry back into the classroom after 6 months out was a positive and inspiring one.
- We have held a weekly Monday staff training session virtually to make sure that the teachers in front of your child every day are able to teach lessons of the highest quality.
- We have trained staff and students to use Teams so that students are able to access the weekly lesson PowerPoints and quizzes set for homework by their teachers.

As I am sure you will appreciate, our staff have had to adapt to a very different set of working conditions. One of these relates to new government expectations that all lessons and quizzes are available for students to access remotely on Microsoft Teams should they have to self-isolate. With this in mind, I have created an additional INSET day for St Mark's staff on **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November**. This day will allow them to create resources of the highest quality for the young people we serve. There will be no school for students on this day.

As we move into term 2 and the winter months, with the national COVID-19 situation worsening, I ask for your continued support with understanding the challenges the school is facing. Whilst we are doing the best we can, it is important parents realise that it is far from 'business as usual' in school. We are working and learning in the 'new norm' and it is more important than ever at this challenging time that we continue to work together in a strong partnership; pupils, parents and the Academy.

Interim Principal Hannah Fahey

Given the challenging times we are working in and changing demands, I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you of some important COVID-19 updates.

### Face Covering

As a result of the Government announcing London moving into Tier 2 restrictions, all pupils have been required to wear a face covering in school. The guidance can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-in-education/face-coverings-in-education> Please support us in reminding your child to bring a face covering to school each day as they are required to wear it when moving around the school.

### Travelling Abroad

The travel quarantine rules are constantly changing. Currently anyone arriving into the UK from certain countries must quarantine for 14 days. If you are planning to travel abroad during the half term, before you book please keep in mind the current quarantine regulations. You will need to ensure that your child is able to return when the school reopens after half-term. Countries, territories and regions can be taken off or added to the 'travel corridor' list at any time. To stay up to date of any changes, register [here](#)

### COVID-19 Symptoms and Reporting Procedure

Please do not send your child to school if they present any of the coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms:

- a new continuous cough.
- a high temperature.
- a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia).
- Note: If your child displays symptoms over the half-term, please ensure that they self-isolate for 10 days. They will not be able to return to school until they have completed their isolation period.

### What to do if your child has symptoms

1. To self-isolate for **at least 10 days** from the first day of their symptoms.
2. To take a **Covid-19 test** and let the school know of the result.
3. That members of your household should self-isolate for **14 days** (including siblings in school).

### What to do if your child tests negative

1. They can stop self-isolating and return to school if they feel well and no longer have symptoms. Members of your household can stop self-isolating.
2. Students who are asked to self-isolate that develop symptoms, they should get tested and inform the school of the test result as soon as possible. Even if the test result is negative, they should remain isolated for the full **14 days**.

### What to do if your child tests positive

1. **Inform the school immediately.**
2. Continue to self-isolate for at least 10 days from the day their symptoms started (and members of their household to continue self-isolating for the full 14 days).
3. Student must **only** return to school when they feel better.  
Please visit <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/> for further advice on self-isolation and testing. You can order a test by visiting <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

### Remote Education at St Mark's Academy

As an Academy we are committed to ensuring that our students and their families have access to our high-quality lessons and home learning when they are in school and at home. Please read this letter carefully to find out how you can access our provision.

### Homework

During lock down, student surveys told us that students found our carefully designed quizzes a useful learning resource. As a result, **our approach to homework this year is that each subject will set a weekly quiz**. This quiz is carefully designed to help teachers to check how much students have learnt in lessons, and to plan their next lessons to provide further stretch and support. Educational research also shows that regular quizzing boosts students' long-term memory retention and supports with learning new ideas and skills. Alongside setting weekly quizzes, **teachers will also be making their lessons available to all students**. This will mean students can go back and look at big ideas and key concepts in their own time, and use these resources to help them with completing their homework quizzes.

### Accessing Work for Students who are Self-Isolating or Absent

The approach outlined above also applies to students who are unable to attend school. Students will be able to keep up with their lessons by looking at teachers' lesson resources and completing weekly quizzes. Once students complete the quizzes, teachers will be able to give students feedback and marks so that they know what they are doing well and what they need to improve.

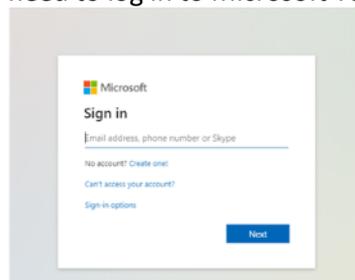
### How do I access lessons and quizzes?

Calendar Students and parents can find out what work has been set for them each day by logging on to Satchel (Once called Show my Homework) <https://www.satchelone.com/login>

Here students will be able to see a calendar which shows them the work that has been set for them each day. If a parent or student has forgotten their login, they can email their coach or Progress Leader.

### Microsoft Teams

Teachers will post links on Satchel to work on Microsoft Teams. This will take students to a page where they will need to log in to Microsoft Teams to access this work.



It will take you to something that looks like this.

#### Email address:

17(Caps lock initial of 1<sup>st</sup> Name)*then* (second name)  
*This is the year you joined.*  
Joe Smith would be

[17JSmith@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk](mailto:17JSmith@stmarks.anthemtrust.uk)

#### Password:

Marks(then full date of Birthday)  
So if you were born 25<sup>th</sup> July 2005: 25072005

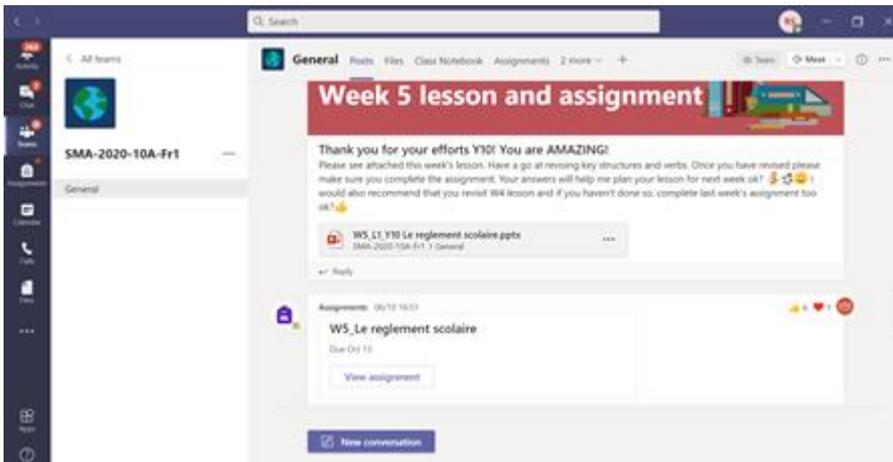
**Marks25072005**

**Your child may have changed this when they first logged in.**

Again, if students forget their log in, they can contact their coach or Progress Leader.

Students can log in to MS Teams in a web browser, or they can download the app to access the work set by their teacher. Once students have logged into Teams, the link on Satchel will take students straight to the quiz and lesson resources set by teachers. See image below for an example of what this might look like. You can see the PowerPoint

lesson which students can click on and the 'assignment' link to the quiz. Students are receiving training in their ICT lessons and/ or in coaching time to support them with developing their skills on MS Teams. MS Teams is used by many universities and businesses, and learning to use it well will benefit students for years to come.



### What do I need to do as a parent or carer?

Ensure your child logs on to Satchel and MS Teams every day to look at the resources and complete their homework quiz. If your child is absent from school and they are well enough, they need to complete the lesson carefully and then the quiz. This will enable their teacher to provide feedback and check their learning.

### What if I need help?

[This video](#) on our website guides you through the process described above and should help you to log in.

You can contact your child's coach or Progress Leader if you need further support with ICT or ICT access. Students can also message their teachers on Satchel if they are at home and need support with specific lessons.

Thank you for everything you will do as parents and carers to ensure students make the most out of their carefully planned home learning.

It has felt like such a gift to be able to lead a community I know and love during such challenging times and I am already looking forward to welcoming students back on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November. My thoughts and prayers are with you all over half term. I pray that you have a restful and safe break.

With Love, Hope & Trust

Hannah Fahey  
**Interim Principal**