



The Matthew Arnold School

Part of the Bourne Education Trust



23rd March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Home Learning

We have moved into uncharted territory from today and I am sure that despite all of our best efforts in using the technology to find creative ways to teach and to learn there will be issues as we all get used to our new reality. Thank you for your support and patience. We are operating on a skeleton staff as requested by the Department for Education and are not always able to answer every email we receive. I am therefore trying to capture some of the current issues in my updates to parents. We are aware that many web-based programmes and other systems are struggling to cope with the unprecedented national demand. I hope that things will improve in time.

Some parents and carers have contacted us worried that it can be quite overwhelming for children to see a long list of activities to complete. Most normally have 25 separate lessons through the school week but no doubt seeing all of this at once can be troubling. We are aware not all work will be completed within the timeframe set and students and staff need some flexibility. The children should try to make sure they pace themselves, have lots of breaks and not worry overly if something is not done until after a deadline. Their teachers will understand. I have been advising staff to be careful when setting work that it does not only involve working on a computer screen and to be aware that not all work will be completed by all students at the same time. The number one issue here is for no one to feel overwhelmed whilst we are still getting used to this new way of working.

The government has now been very clear in that everyone should be practising social distancing and our students should therefore be at home and encouraged to stay in touch with each other by phone and online and not by meeting up. They should do their best to complete the work we set during the school day.

Some parents and students have been contacting their teachers about the cancellation of exams. We still do not have enough detail about how the predicted grade system will work. I politely request that no further communication with teachers about this occurs. I have instructed teachers not to respond to requests to discuss grades. We do not want to jeopardise the process once the detailed guidance has been published.

We are now very close to finalising a system to ensure provision for those entitled to Free School Meals. Parents and carers of those entitled to Free School Meals will be receiving a text and/or email regarding this shortly.

I will write again with further updates in due course.

Yours sincerely

Mary Gould
Head Teacher

