

Dear parents and carers,

We hope this message finds you and your families safe and well.

You will, no doubt, have seen Wednesday's announcement regarding the continued closure of schools to most students. As referenced by Mr Watson's message yesterday, the Prime Minister informed us that schools may begin reopening to wider groups of students from 8<sup>th</sup> March "at the earliest" but, we do not, as yet, have any further details. In light of these updates, and in response to lots of positive feedback from students and parents on our live elements from this week and last, we will be offering additional interactive sessions from Monday.

From next week, students in Years 7-11 will receive at least two live elements for mentoring. Students will be invited to attend these sessions through a notification on Show My Homework, so must check their set tasks regularly. Mentors will be offering Teams meetings in which students can meet with their peers and their mentor to discuss their learning and ask any questions they may have. These will be scheduled outside of normal lesson times but still around the school day. Your mentor will ensure the time and date of each session is clearly signposted for your child.

In addition, next week, virtual year group assemblies will take place for students in Years 7-11. These will be delivered by the relevant Head of Learning and our Heads of Ethos and Engagement and will take place in Core Learning lessons. Furthermore, students in Years 9, 10 and 11 will also be offered at least one live element per subject over the next fortnight. Again, invitations to join these sessions will be shared via Show My Homework so please check your tasks regularly. After half term, students in Years 7 and 8 will also be offered regular live elements across the curriculum, in addition to their mentoring and year group interactive sessions.

We have attached our guidance (first shared last week) on how to access Microsoft Teams, for your information. We would strongly encourage your child to make use of this provision along with the rest of the Office 365 suite, if they are able to, as it offers a wealth of useful tools. If you have any technical questions regarding accessing this software or the functions within it, please contact Mr Sampson on [msampson@canterbury.kent.sch.uk](mailto:msampson@canterbury.kent.sch.uk) and he will be able to provide you with technical support. You will also find attached a reminder of our '**Online Learning Guidelines**' outlining what staff will expect in terms of your child's conduct whilst using Microsoft Teams. Please read this guidance over the weekend in anticipation of these additional interactive sessions.

It is important to reiterate, however, as mentioned in Mr Watson's message earlier this week, that we do not intend to replace our existing remote learning package with these live sessions but, instead, offer them to give further support and structure to those who wish to use them. They are not compulsory and we know that some of our students may not choose them from our learning menu as it may not suit their particular style of learning. Teacher input in these sessions will be recorded and shared, wherever possible, for the benefit of those who may be unable to access live elements at the time they are delivered. We hope you recognise and appreciate our flexible approach and we thank you for the continued feedback you have been providing us during this period of remote learning.

At this most difficult time for our families, we are anxious to support our students as much as we can. For example, we know that it can often be difficult for families to access some of the equipment that is required for their children to complete work from home. We have stocked our minibuses with supplies of stationery, art supplies, technical equipment and some household goods (such as toilet paper and sanitary products) and will be touring our communities over the coming weeks. The minibuses will also include a lending library of books that will be loaned to students who would like extra reading material.

The minibuses will visit the following locations next week:

<b>Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> February</b>	<b>Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> February</b>	<b>Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> February</b>
10:45-11:30 Spring Lane Neighbourhood Centre	10:00-10:30 Lucerne Community Centre, Whitstable	10:00-10:45 Chartham Sports Club
11:45-12:30 Talavera Road, Howe Barracks by playpark	10:45-11:15 Whitstable Youth Hub	11:00-11:45 Chartham Village Hall
12:45-13:30 Querns Road Community Centre	11:45-12:30 Poppy Children's Centre, Herne Bay	12:30-13:15 Aylesham Community Workshop
13:45-14:30 St Stephen's Community Centre	13:00-13:45 Hersden Community Centre	13:45-14:30 Thanington Neighbourhood Resource Centre
14:45-15:30 Sunrise Café, Sturry Road	14:00-14:45 Link Road, Sturry	14:45-15:30 Canterbury Academy Riverside Centre

Please refer to national guidelines when visiting our minibuses and ensure you maintain social distancing and wear an appropriate face covering.

You may be aware that next week (1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> February) is Children's Mental Health week. As part of this week, our mentoring sessions will focus on improving and maintaining positive mental health at this difficult time, and will provide tips for our students. To reiterate our message from last week, we would encourage all our students to build well-being breaks into their day, ensuring that they step away from their work at regular intervals. We recognise the immense strain placed on children and families at this time and will do as much as we can to support our students. Please don't hesitate to contact us should you feel your child would benefit from additional intervention.

Again, our deepest thanks to you for all you are doing to support your children, our students, at this continuingly challenging time.

Yours faithfully,

Angela Banbery  
Head of Middle School

James Brooke  
Head of Senior School