

JMHS guide to help parents support home learning

Introduction

We appreciate that every child is different and that every family faces different circumstances during the period of lockdown. We would like to thank every parent, carer or family member for your support at this unusual time. We have continued to provide work for your son or daughter which is intended to support their learning during the period when school is closed. We fully appreciate that every family will be making decisions that are suited to their circumstances so please use this information as a guide rather than a prescriptive way to work. You know what works best for your family.

The basics

1. Teachers are setting lessons in line with the normal school timetable via e-praise, so most students in Years 7-Y10 will have four or five lessons set on one day.
2. Teachers are setting lessons in line with the summer term curriculum plan for each subject, so that all lessons contribute to overall learning aims and will help students when we return to school. All subjects have published their week by week guides in the curriculum section of the school website.
3. Teachers will try to avoid providing too much new information so as not to disadvantage students. Clearly remote learning is not as effective as learning at school, so this is a difficult balance. Teachers will try to vary tasks as much as possible.
4. Teachers set lessons in e-praise as homework, so students can tick off tasks they have completed.
5. Teachers are aiming to set core work for each lesson which should last 30-40 minutes. However we are aware that all students work at different speeds, therefore we would encourage parents who feel that their children are spending too long on their work to stop when they feel they have spent enough time on the task.
6. We are asking teachers to set and clearly label extension tasks, so that students who finish early have additional tasks to complete. If parents feel students are spending insufficient time on work, they can encourage students to complete extension tasks to a high standard.
7. We are encouraging teachers to set some tasks where the students can tell how well they are doing eg by using MyMaths or BBC Bitesize exercises or e-praise quizzes.
8. If a student is experiencing difficulties with the work, we are encouraging students or parents to email the subject teacher directly so that any difficulty can be swiftly resolved.
9. As Years 10 & 12 are already on examination pathways it is more likely that teachers will ask for specific work to be sent to them in these year groups. Teachers will then give brief feedback on relevant work either via e-praise or email. As the lockdown continues for longer, we will aim to provide more opportunities for students in younger year groups to submit work and receive feedback.
10. Some teachers are teaching live lessons in Microsoft Teams, particularly to Y10 and above. These can be accessed live or viewed as a video later. We would encourage students to participate where possible when this occurs. In line with professional advice we do not require staff to deliver live lessons. Staff will make individual decisions based on their unique circumstances whether to provide live lessons or not.

Frequently asked questions

Q1: Does my child have to stick to the exact school timetable?

Answer: No, students can do their work at any time during the day that suits them and their family. Many families start the day with some exercise eg PE with Joe. Some older students start later and finish later. Some students have even produced their own daily or weekly timetables to suit their routines. We do recommend that students complete work on the day it is set if possible, so that they do not fall behind and have weekends free so they can have a break.

Q2: My child is not motivated to do the work, what can I do?

Answer: If you feel that the lack of motivation is linked to the work set for a subject, you can email the subject teacher and ask for help. If you feel your child would benefit from, for example, more creative tasks you could suggest they do a more creative task that covers similar content. You could try breaking the day up and offering a

small reward for each lesson completed. You could ask your child to show you work they have completed and praise them for completed work.

Q3: My child does not have a computer or a laptop and I feel that they are disadvantaged, what can I do?

Answer: 80 parents have arranged to purchase a chrome book laptop from the school either through a single payment or by paying in instalments over a longer timescale. The total cost is about £330. If you would like to purchase a chrome book, we still have about 30 available and you can contact Mr Henderson, our ICT co-ordinator at donald.henderson@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk. If you would like a laptop for your child but due to financial pressures cannot afford one, please contact peter.hammond@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk. Mr Hammond will be happy to look at finding a way for you to borrow a school laptop.

Q4: My child has finished their exercise book, what can I do?

Answer: It is fine for them to work on paper. Alternatively you can arrange to come to reception between 08:30 and 10:00 on a school morning to pick up some exercise books or revision cards. We will not have the different colours or sizes of books subject departments give out but will be able to supply something for them to write on. We do not expect or require any parent/carer to print anything from home.

Q5: I am keen to help my child and have some time to do so, but am not sure how to go about this. Can you give me some ideas?

Answer: Here are a few thoughts that might be useful:

- I personally find sitting with my children at the kitchen table so we are all working together is useful, even if I am not always available to help them.
- Sometimes, but not too often, asking them to show you their work so you can give some positive feedback often helps, eg your work is well set out and organised, you have written in full sentences and explained your work well, I love the way you kept trying at that difficult question, yes I can see you are bored but I am pleased you have kept trying, that is such a lovely idea etc, etc.
- Sometimes suggesting they look up a video on BBC Bitesize or a lesson on MyMaths to help.
- Sometimes suggesting they have a break and try something else if they are totally fed up with a lesson or suggesting an alternative task on the lesson topic to do instead.
- Offering to test them or suggesting they do a facetime/video call with a friend to test them or to ask for help.
- Reassuring them that they are trying their best and that it does not have to be perfect.
- Reviewing work in the textbook or exercise book or even using Google to find answers is useful. Try to avoid giving the answer but instead coach your son or daughter to work through to the answer. Remember the process of arriving at an answer (correct or incorrect) is a crucial part of learning.
- Offer reassurance that the lockdown is time limited and that we will focus extremely hard on ensuring the impact of the lockdown on your child's education is minimised.

Q6: My child is just finding the work too hard, what can I do?

Answer: Contact our Acting SENDCO, Sally King at sally.king@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk who will put a member of our learning support team in touch with you so that they can look at adapting the tasks that are being set so your child can complete some work and experience success.

Q7: My child completes the work set rapidly including extension tasks and needs additional challenge

Answer: Ask your child to enter the Headteacher's May Challenge. This involves your child researching any topic of their choice and submitting it to me at andy.evans@jmhs.hereford.sch.uk. The work can be emailed to me or I can be sent a link to a student's area on the JMHS network or OneDrive for larger files. Students can research any topic that interests them. Work can take the form of a poster, an essay, a diagram, a model, a presentation, a short podcast, video or any format that I can view. I will award Housepoints and give email feedback to all entrants received by 9am on Thursday 21st May. There will be prizes for the top three entries. Research projects should be short and I will aim to produce an example in the form of a 10 minute online assembly presentation which I am currently looking into at the moment.