

22nd May 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

Following the recent letter from Mr Thomas, I am writing to inform you of how we hope to support your son over the coming weeks. Our stance has always been a consistent one in that we will provide work for your son to do using Show My Homework but that we would not apply pressure for it all to be completed, where this is causing distress. With the announcement that Year 7 and 8 boys will not return to school until September, our primary concern now is that they will be missing their friends and will have been out of any sort of school routine for over 5 months when they return. We have real concerns about the mental health of the boys and therefore we propose to introduce a tutorial programme using Microsoft Teams.

While we do not have the capacity to provide a 'live' teaching timetable for the boys lower down the school, we are keen to ensure that Yr7 & 8 get to spend at least 30 minutes a week where they can talk to and interact with a member of staff and other boys 'live' using Microsoft Teams. In most cases this will be his tutor, although a number of staff have volunteered to take these sessions. The aim of these sessions is to keep your son connected with Brymore as well as to provide a supportive structure for any concerns he may have. It is also an opportunity for him to connect with others in his tutor group and to ask about any difficulties he might be having on SMH, with regard to school work or in general. These sessions will be delivered on Fridays at 10.40am and there will be approximately 10 boys in each group. We wish to start these sessions on Friday 5th June but please bear with staff as some will be using this technology for the first time.

What is Teams and how will my son be using it?

Microsoft Teams is an online platform that allows staff to meet with students in 'real' time. Students log into Teams using the new email address and password given to them in this letter. They will see their 'classes' on their profile and can go to their 'tutor group' Team. Staff will be inviting students to a 'meeting' at 10.40am on Fridays and students can click on their calendar, click on this meeting and 'join'. We hope they will find this contact helpful, as other year groups have. This does however depend on students being trustworthy, responsible and aware of online safety. This is what Brymore boys do best and I am sure that they will understand that it is vital that they are aware of and adhere to the rules and regulations of online safety, if this way of working is to be effective for all.

With this in mind, please also see the other important document associated with this letter - '**Expectations of Student Conduct - Remote Teaching**'. Please read this with your son and make sure he understands the consequences of not following these rules (the school will contact parents and he will be refused entry to future lessons). I ask that you sign and submit this to the school, either via MyEd, post or email by **Wednesday 3rd June**. All of this needs to be in place before staff can begin working with 'live' groups. This is why the deadline is Wednesday and staff will not begin 'live' group work until Friday 5th June.*

***A note on Teams Meetings (live video)**

Boys do not need to be 'seen' in these meetings or 'heard'. You can decide whether to switch on the camera or the microphone. Boys can take part in these lessons by watching and hearing others and sending live text messages which the teacher can respond to.

Praestantia have prepared a Parent video to help get you started on Teams and to get an idea of what Teams is all about. Please watch the video by following this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AC3iMDyoJI>

What are the practicalities of setting up Teams – what do I need to know?

Firstly, boys have been issued with new email addresses. These are as follows:

Year 8

12BloggsJ@mybrymore.school

If your son has a hyphenated surname or is double-barrelled, only the first part of the surname is used ie. Year 8 David Smith-Jones would be 12SmithD@mybrymore.school

Year 7

13BloggsJ@mybrymore.school

If your son has a hyphenated surname or is double-barrelled, only the first part of the surname is used ie. Year 7 David Smith-Jones would be 13SmithD@mybrymore.school

The password for your son will be:

Bry(dot)date of birth!

For every student. So, if Joe Bloggs was born on 21st June 2005 his password will be **Bry.210605!**

If he was born on 26th January 2013 it would be **Bry.260113!**

Please remember the dot after Bry and the exclamation mark after the date of birth.

How do we set up Teams?

There are two ways to set up Teams.

Firstly, on a PC or laptop.

1. Type 'Office 365 login' into your browser. Use Microsoft Edge if you can.
2. You should now be able to log in, using your **new** Microsoft email address and password.
3. Click on the Teams icon in the row
4. When you enter, you will see your classes as Teams on your dashboard.
5. Click on a box to enter that 'class'
6. You might want to download the Teams app onto your PC/ laptop to make it quicker

On a phone/ ipad/tablet

1. Download the Teams app
2. You should now be able to log in, using your **new** Microsoft email address and password.
3. When you log in, you will see your classes as Teams on your dashboard.
4. Click on a box to enter that 'Team'

Staff **will not be activating classes and inviting students into them before half term**. This is to give you time to read this information, go through the safeguarding documents and rules with your son, watch the video and get an understanding of Teams before boys are given access to Teams.

So, in summary

- Teams will be offered to boys as an online platform from **Friday 5th June**.
- Boys should log on to their tutor group on Teams, at 10.40am
- Please read, agree and submit the '**Expectations of Student Conduct - Remote Teaching**', preferably via MyEd or email, or post it to school by **Wednesday 3rd June**
- Please watch the Parent Training video on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8AC3iMDyoJI>
- Use the guide above to help get your son set up on Teams, ready for next week

Finally, I know this is a lot to take in! You may need to take a break and come back to it. As with everything we are doing, this is designed to be supportive and not to cause issues at home. We hope that you find our offer reasonable. **Boys can use their phones and do not need a laptop to access Teams**. We continue to be aware that some of you are struggling with internet access and where this is the case, please let us know.

I hope you find this useful. Please contact us **today or from the 1st June** with any concerns or problems you have. There will be teething problems I know - and I thank you for your understanding in advance.

Take care
VICKY DAVIS
Deputy Headteacher