

November 2020

Dear Parent/Guardian

As you are aware it has always been our intention that if we should have to send a year group home to isolate due to a positive Covid test or indeed if the school is asked to close again by the government then we will continue to teach your son remotely using Microsoft Teams. We used Teams very successfully to teach during the first lockdown. It is similar to Zoom, which I'm sure some of you have now become quite used to.

The Bridgwater College Trust has employed Praestantia to support with the technical side, uploading groups onto Teams and supporting staff development.

The timetable your son will follow is sent as another attachment with this letter.

This is our attempt to balance our teaching with what is realistic and feasible in busy family homes. We have tried to make sure that boys have all their subjects at least once a week, with English, maths and science at least twice a week. We have also tried to keep the time spent online to two hours a day maximum. This is because we know that being online all day, with limited access to devices is unrealistic – and probably not healthy. It also takes into account the need for some boys to help out at home, by keeping to mornings only. The short lessons are designed for teachers to touch base, set work and give feedback to boys. They will be expected to work outside of this time but hopefully, the lessons will make it easier to stay on track. For some staff and families, who were not online in the summer, this is new so we expect things to go wrong and we hope you will bear with us! We will ask boys and you how you think it is going and adjust the timetable as and when necessary. This is a starting point.

As you can see from the timetable, lessons will be around 30 minutes long and students will have morning lessons only. This is to enable staff to prepare for the Teams lesson and to give transition time from face to face teaching in school to online teaching for those who are at home. I must emphasise that boys who are at home individually for a short period of isolation will have work set by the Trust and be expected to keep up to date on SMH. Unfortunately, we do not have capacity to provide online learning for individual boys.

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

Microsoft Teams is an online platform that allows teachers to set work, students to access work, submit work and get feedback in 'real' time. Students log into Teams using the email address and password that they use in school. They will see all their 'classes' on their profile and can go to each 'lesson' to complete the work for that day. We are asking that students follow the timetable above and visit their lessons at these times. Staff will be online at these times and ready to respond to questions and give feedback. Most lessons will stream 'live' and teachers will 'invite' their students to 'join' a lesson (like Skype or Zoom) at the times on the timetable attached.

Importantly, teaching 'live' depends 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, we are resending you the **Expectations of Student Conduct** document. As many of you did in the summer, please read this with your son, keep it somewhere safe 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). **Unless we hear from you we will presume that you agree to these expectations.** As we all know, things can change rapidly and in the event of a year group being sent home we will have little notice and therefore would like to get you ready for this now before staff begin teaching 'live' lessons so that we can hit the ground running, although it is likely that it will take a day or two to set up the live lessons.

***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 email addresses. The formats of these are as follows:

If your son is in Year 7 the prefix is 14

14BloggsJ@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 14SmithD@mybrymore.school

Year 8 email address format: 13BloggsJ@mybrymore.school

Year 9 email address format: 12BloggsJ@mybrymore.school

Year 10 email address format: 11BloggsJ@mybrymore.school

Year 11 email address format: 10BloggsJ@mybrymore.school

The password for your son will be: **Bry(dot)date of birth!**

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 school 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

1. Download the Teams app
2. You should now be able to log in, using your school 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 until a year group is sent home. This gives 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
- Boys should log on to lessons on Teams, at the times given on the timetable
- If boys cannot log in at this time, the work will be available all day but the teacher will be online during this period and any 'live' lessons will happen at this time
- Please read the '**Expectations of Student Conduct**' document with your son
- 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 a quick transfer to online learning should the need arise.

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. Boys can use their phones and do not need a laptop to access Teams, though of course this is helpful.

Many of you will recognise much of this letter as the same as the one you received in the summer. If that is the case, I hope this means you feel confident using Teams. If this is the first time you are receiving this, I hope you find the instructions useful and are able to follow them. If not, or if there are any issues you can foresee in accessing online learning from home, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Take care

Vicky Davis
Deputy Headteacher