



Friday, 3 April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Borlase@Home  
Teaching and Learning after Easter**

Thank you so much everyone for your emails of support. The students have also been very constructive in giving feedback to teachers in different learning scenarios, explaining what works for them. We have met as teachers across the last two weeks in different groups, as departments, key stages, heads of department, pastoral teams etc to consider how we achieve the most effective balance for successful learning through Borlase@Home. Thank you so much for your forbearance in honouring the screen-free Wednesday this week; this enabled staff to meet as departments and share ideas on the many new challenges we need to prepare for. This includes ensuring we cover the curriculum for Years 7-10 and 12, GCSE options support, transition for Years 11 into 12, transition of new Year 7 etc. I have sent separate letters to Year 11 and 13 students and parents with the recent update from the DfE on qualifications that was published this afternoon.

We do not know how long this period of Borlase@Home will last, but the staff at Borlase are committed to making this work. When the students are able to return, we want them to be able to slot back easily into the school routines and we want to ensure they do not fall behind educationally.

Our aims of Borlase@Home remain true to the school's vision - inspire, empower to shape the future. This may look different in the @Home world but this new environment truly gives young people that opportunity to be empowered in leading their own learning. The inspiration is most definitely coming from the students and the teachers working together. I looked in on a number of our Academic Societies now decamped to the Borlase@Home world and could see the amazing learning that is continuing there.

For Borlase@Home we have some very clear aims:

- to deliver the school curriculum to ensure students stay on track with their learning
- to empower students to build on class learning through independent study
- to support student wellbeing through keeping the student community connected and through pastoral support.
- to sustain a sense of school ethos and identity, including student leadership
- to develop Borlase learners who can adapt back quickly to the Borlase learning environment, including the structure of school routines and expectations.

To enable this to happen successfully we also need to be sure the staff can support these aims effectively in this environment. Your role as parents in encouraging student

engagement will also be all the more important over these months and we are trying to enable families to build in family time where usual routines have changed.

The students and many parents have fed back how all year groups are enjoying the interactive lessons and seeing their classes in the context of school. It is very important all students experience this while, at the same time, we need to take on board concerns about the amount of continuous screen time for students and the challenges of sustaining this type of teaching across the day. We are confident we can achieve a balance of interactive learning and working in books/ on paper, reading and researching independently, working in groups or pairs and supporting knowledge retrieval through assessments and tests. We are also working on a mentoring system for students who need additional support and will plan this into the programme. Students will also need to complete homework outside lessons time to ensure they keep up with their learning. We will give each year group advice on what this will look like. Likewise we will be setting assessments to ensure we know that students are understanding and remembering curriculum content. We will set the dates for these over the next couple of weeks and share them with you all but the scheduled May exam week will not now take place.

To achieve the above we are going to try a slightly different structure to the school day after Easter. This does not require a change to the timetable and it means that everyone will have all their lessons while also having some more freedom around how to spend family time and independent learning/ consolidating or extending learning.

### **The Borlase@Home Day**

Tutor Period / Assembly **8.40 - 8.55**

(We do need to record attendance so students need to report in for registration. Please will **PARENTS** email Matron/ SSO directly, ideally by 8.30am, if your child is unwell, to avoid us chasing you unnecessarily. Matron should be emailed using [matronabsence@swbgs.com](mailto:matronabsence@swbgs.com) and the 6th form team using [sixthformabsence@swbgs.com](mailto:sixthformabsence@swbgs.com))

Period 1 **9.00 - 9.40**

(10 minute gaps have been built in between all lessons to allow stretch and getting ready and logged on for the start of the next lesson)

Period 2 **9.50 - 10.30**

Break **10.30 - 11.15**  
(45 minutes - longer, to allow exercise/ societies)

Period 3 **11.15 - 11.55**

Period 4 **12.05 - 12.45**

Lunch **12.45 - 1.30**

(45 minutes, to enable earlier finish for family flexibility)

Period 5

1.30 - 2.10

Years 7-10 [matronabsence@swbgs.com](mailto:matronabsence@swbgs.com)

**Please note that Peripatetic Music/LAMDA lessons will still run to 3.30 p.m.**

The earlier end to the formal school day enables students, staff and families to have greater flexibility around planning their restricted recreational activities and when to do homework and independent learning. We also hope it enables students to enjoy learning some of the new skills they have been talking about. As we progress, we also hope to launch inter house competitions and activities. Again, the earlier finish supports staff planning. Not all lessons will be Google Meets but all teachers will include a Google Meet with each of their classes *at least* once a week unless at KS3 where you have a subject once a week - that might work better as a Google Meet every other lesson allowing students time to complete a creative task.

Timings of lessons will need to be strictly observed with punctuality very important, hence the 10 minute gaps for toilet breaks and time to log into each lesson. Interactive lessons will *start* with teacher interactions/presentations as teachers have decided that this works best in the Borlase@Home learning environment.

We would like to try this adapted school day structure for a couple of weeks following the Easter Holidays and will review. We will ask students to feed back to their Learning Mentors if they are finding any problems with technology/ general issues with their timetables as they go along and they will liaise with departments. If you have any queries as parents please email [parents@swbgs.com](mailto:parents@swbgs.com) marked FAO School Day KS3 / KS4 / KS5 as appropriate.

Year 11 and 13 students will have finished their courses completely shortly after Easter. Our current Year 10 students will then become our Year 11 and our Year 11 will have A Level taster lessons and so forth.

We all, as staff, continue to be hugely impressed by the engagement of students and are grateful to parents for your continued enthusiastic support in encouraging and maintaining the important routine of attending school when you are managing your own jobs at home and family commitments.

Many thanks indeed everyone,  
Stay safe and close to home,

Kay Mountfield  
Headteacher