

Expectations for Home Learning

Purpose and overall principles

- The purpose of this document is to set out our expectations for home learning while school remains closed as a result of the Covid-19 crisis.
- The overall aim is to provide work for students so that they can continue their education ***as best as possible under the circumstances***. None of us know how long it will be until schools re-open fully and we therefore need to work on the assumption that it could be quite some time. This means that it is important that we all do what we can to ensure students keep learning, even though this will never be a proper substitute for school. Please see Appendix A for some **top tips** on how parents can support home learning.
- We are all learning about what works best and things are changing all the time. Therefore, we will keep updating this document as we learn more.
- We understand that home circumstances are very different for everybody and that this will affect what work can be completed. We do not want to add unnecessarily to the pressure many families are already feeling. There will be a big difference between, for example, a family where there is one child with unlimited access to a computer and two parents at home able to help with home learning compared to a household where only one parent is at home and needs to care for younger siblings.
- Similarly, we ask that students and parents appreciate that teachers are not all able to work from home equally at the moment and that many of them have the same kinds of worries that you do in terms of things like job security for partners and the health and well-being of relatives. If, for example, teachers have young children to care for or an unreliable internet connection, then they are not as able to spend as long planning materials, respond as quickly to messages from students/parents or to facilitate online lessons.

Amount of work

- It is very difficult for teachers to gauge how long work will take to complete, bearing in mind that students are of different abilities and have access to different levels of support at home. Therefore, we are aiming to set plenty of work to ensure that those who are willing and able to get on with it can do so.
- However, we are doing this on the understanding that many/most students will not complete every piece of work that has been set. This is absolutely fine; the most important thing is that we do not want students or parents feeling unnecessarily anxious. Students should not spend a long time worrying if a piece of work is too difficult or taking too long – they just move onto something else that they can do

Headteacher: Mr Gwyn Williams

Lymm High School, Oughtrington Lane, Lymm, WA13 0RB
01925 755458 info@lymmhigh.org.uk www.lymmhigh.org.uk



productively. They can also contact their teacher via SMHW or email for help. **We will certainly not be sanctioning any student for not completing work.**

- It is difficult to give precise guidance on how many hours work students should be doing each day. The fact is that 3-4 hours of really focused, good quality work each day will be far more beneficial than 6 hours of low quality, 'half-hearted' work. For KS3 students in particular, we certainly do not recommend more than the five hours of lessons they would have on a normal school day. If a student really wants to do more, we would encourage them to explore all the various websites available to enrich learning and/or simply read some books on topics that interest them.
- On the other hand, we think it reasonable to expect KS4 and KS5 students to make a little more effort to keep up with the work set – in particular, making sure they complete the more important 'key pieces' of work that we are aiming to set in most subjects (see section on marking/feedback)

Type of work

- All work will continue to be set via Show My Homework. Students should email Mrs Brennan at jbrennan@lymmhigh.org.uk if they have forgotten your login details or are having trouble accessing SMHW.
- There are a lot of online resources that can be useful, including some 'government backed' ones. Teachers will use these where they are relevant (and will point students in their direction when this is the case) but we strongly recommend sticking with the work we set via SMHW. It can be very difficult to judge whether a lot of online materials are suitable and, especially for GCSE and A' level, they need to fit with the curriculum we are following at Lymm High School.
- Prior to Easter, we focused on setting work that consolidated previous learning. Most subjects will now move towards setting work on new topics. This might make it more difficult to complete some work in some cases so, again, we say to students is that they must try not to worry, and just do their best.
- It is much harder for some subjects – especially practical subjects – to set work remotely. We will focus on setting meaningful work as far as we can, rather than a set amount purely for the sake of it.
- We don't know what will happen with exams next summer (i.e. 2021). If we are closed for much longer, some kind of allowances will have to be made for so much school being missed but, for the time being, we will work on the assumption that we still need to cover the whole course before the end of Year 11/13 and make any necessary adjustments when we are back in school. This means it is especially important for students in Years 10 and 12 to follow the work set on SMHW as best they can.
- We are trying to set work that does not require extensive use of the internet or specific resources at home, recognising that this isn't practical for many students. At the same time, there are some really good materials that can be accessed online and we don't want everybody to miss out where this is the case. We will try to ensure a reasonable balance and we simply encourage students who are struggling with anything to try not to worry and to move onto a subject/activity where they *can* work productively.
- For Year 11 students staying on for Sixth Form, we are setting work that will help them prepare for KS5 courses. Further details regarding this transition work can be found on the school website.
- For year 13, we have focused on providing enrichment activities to keep students engaged in learning and help prepare for university. Please see the school website for more details.
- We also recommend Year 12 students use the time to start preparing UCAS applications where relevant. Please see the website for further details of this.

Online 'lessons'

- There is absolutely no expectation that Lymm High School teachers provide online lessons. These are a lot easier for some teachers to provide than others and we do not want to put pressure on those who cannot offer them easily – whether that is because of their own family circumstances or because they do not have sufficiently reliable technology at home. We are also aware that many families are not in a position where students can access online lessons at any point in the day.
- That said, some staff and students have found them useful and relatively easy to deliver/access and therefore we are not stopping them altogether.
- Where possible, those teachers who can offer such lessons will do so for as many students as possible – even where students are not in their classes. We will prioritise exam year groups for any online lessons.
- Most departments are intending to focus on providing 'clinics' where students can login 'live' to ask questions about the work that has been set and teachers can address common misconceptions, rather than trying to deliver whole lessons on new content.

Marking/feedback

Key Stage Three:

- Teachers will not be marking work for KS3 students – doing this meaningfully just isn't feasible in the current circumstances.
- However, students should keep their work safe. Depending on how long school ends up being closed for, teachers will either mark it when we return or – more likely – issue Hall points and rewards where students have clearly been working hard at home.
- At the same time, we will try as best we can to provide KS3 students with some kind of general feedback in whichever ways suits different subjects best. For example: providing answers to questions that have been set, from which students/parents can then self-assess; online quizzes; or generic feedback based on common misconceptions.

Year 10 and Year 12:

- We are going to try to provide some more individual feedback for KS4 and KS5 students where possible.
- What this looks like will vary from subject to subject. For subjects like Maths and Science, it may well be possible to do this effectively via online systems – e.g. quizzes like Tassomai or Seneca – or by providing worked solutions to tests that mean students can self-assess easily. For other subjects – e.g. English or Humanities – this will probably mean students submitting work via email or Microsoft Teams for teachers to review and return with comments.
- Either way, we will focus on marking certain 'key pieces' of work every 2-3 pieces rather than everything students are doing.

How to support home learning

Follow this guidance to create a positive learning environment at home

Be realistic about what you can do

- **You are not expected to become teachers** and your children aren't expected to learn as they do in school. Simply **providing your children with some structure** at home will help them to adapt. Use the tips below to help you make this work for your household.
 - **Don't put too much pressure on yourself.** Households are operating in very different circumstances and some will find it much easier than others. You can only do your best.
 - **Take an interest.** The most important thing you can do is to reinforce the importance of schoolwork by taking an interest. Look at Show My Homework with your children, ask them questions about what they have been learning, look at what they have produced and keep encouraging them. You don't have to know everything (or even anything!) about the topics they are studying in order to help them.
 - **Follow the work set on Show My Homework.** There are a lot of useful websites available to support learning, but it is very easy to spend all day searching for the 'right' things and this can be quite stressful. Leave the searching to teachers, who will recommend things they find that are suitable. If you stick to SMHW, you can't go far wrong.
 - **Experiment** and be prepared to be flexible. What's working and what isn't? Ask your children, involve them in decisions about what is best and don't be frightened of trying different things.
 - **Every day is a new day.** There will be times where it all goes wrong. Expect this and try not to worry when it happens. Just remind yourself that this situation is unprecedented and start again tomorrow.
 - **Share the load if there are two parents at home.** Split the day into 2-3 hour slots and take turns to keep an eye on things
 - Accept that children will **probably watch more TV and spend time on their phone** – that's ok (though you might want to set/agree some screen time limits and certainly make sure they have their phones switched off when it is time for work).
 - **Take care of your own health and wellbeing.** This will be new for your entire household, so give it time and make sure you look after yourself as well.
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Stick to a set routine wherever possible

- **Create and stick to a timetable/routine** if you can. This is what children are used to and it will help everyone. For example, try to eat breakfast at the same time and make sure children are washed and dressed before starting the 'school' day.
- **Stick the timetable up on the wall** so everyone knows what they should be doing when, and tick activities off throughout the day
- **Keep a clear and healthy distinction between 'school time' and 'home time'.** Don't let children stay in pyjamas on school days, switch off mobile devices during 'lesson' time and have a clear cut-off time at the end of the day so everyone can relax after that point. Treat weekends differently.

- **Designate a working space if possible**, so that children have somewhere quiet and suitable to work. This also helps to separate work from free time.
 - **Use your child's usual school timetable as a guide.** For example, if they were due to have English, Maths, Geography and Art today, then aim to spend about an hour each on those subjects.
 - **Check in with your children and try to keep to the timetable but be flexible.** If a task/activity is going well or they want more time, then they can extend it. If, on the other hand, something is just too difficult then feel free to move onto something where they can work more productively. Remember, an hour of focussed, good quality work is worth a lot more than two hours of 'half-hearted' effort or battling away with a topic your child isn't understanding.
 - If you have more than one child at home, **consider combining their timetables.** For example, they might exercise and do maths together. Again, experiment with what works for your household
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Make time for exercise and breaks throughout the day

- **Starting each morning with a [PE lesson](#)** at 9am with Joe Wicks or going for a jog is an ideal way to begin the day
- **Have clear breaks in your timetable.** Perhaps even let children look at their phones during these times!
- If you have a **garden, use it regularly.** If you don't, try to get out **once a day** as permitted by the government.
- Getting your children to **write in a diary what they have done and how they are feeling at the end of each day** can help them manage their emotions as well as provide a nice routine to finish the school day.