



14<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Re: Student Well-being**

As a school we are really proud of how well our students have managed the transition to blended learning on our new platform and we congratulate them for their positive attitude and resilience. We now feel it is important to write to you, so that you may share with your child, how vital it is that they are balancing their well-being with their remote learning from home.

We know that blended learning provides many benefits for our students and that logging onto live lessons with their teachers helps them keep the structure of their day and enjoy being part of the class and school community. However, we also want to ensure that students understand their work expectations so that they are able to maintain positive mental health. Students in Years 7-11 are not expected to complete additional classwork outside of the allocated time for their lesson and where work has not been completed during the lesson hour, we advise they should not continue working on this as this will affect their overall work life balance, and it is vital students have time to unwind and relax. All lessons which take place on Teams will also be available on Firefly in case students are absent, have technical issues or need to review something from the lesson.

We also understand that blended learning generates its' own set of challenges and questions and therefore we have provided a Frequently Asked Questions Guide which we hope you and your child find useful in answering these queries.

We would like to make it clear that whilst we will continue to promote learning and high levels of academic progress during this school closure period, we also want our students to prioritise their well-being and remain happy, safe and motivated.

The school has also created a number of links to promote positive well-being on our website. Please encourage your child to visit these or through Firefly at the address below:

<https://www.ashmoleacademy.org/page/?title=Well+Being+and+Mental+Health&pid=769>

If you would like to talk to someone about your child's well-being, please contact their Head of Year in the first instance.

Yours faithfully

Mrs N Brown  
**Assistant Head Teacher**

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## **Frequently Asked Questions for Students**

### **How should I structure my day?**

To manage both your academic work and well-being, we ask that all students follow the normal school day.

We advise that you wake up in enough time in the morning to ensure you are washed, dressed and have a good breakfast before you sit down at your work area. The majority of lessons on your timetable will have some element of “Live” teaching, however this will not be for the entire hour. Instead, teachers would only spend a maximum of 45 minutes online with you and it may only be as long as 10 or 15 minutes; they may set you individual tasks during this time however you should spend no longer than the actual lesson time on any tasks. For example, if your Period 1 teacher teaches live from 08.40 – 09.10am and then sets you an independent task, you should not work on this past 09.45am when your Period 2 lesson begins. You will be set assessed homework as normal by your teachers – this work can of course be completed outside of the lesson time.

A reminder of the school timetable is at the bottom of this document.

### **What should I do if I do not complete the lesson tasks within the one-hour lesson time?**

If you do not complete the tasks fully, then you should not continue to work on these past the allocated time for that lesson in your day. It is really important that you do not work over your break and lunch. This time is allocated for your leisure and well-being and it is important that you take a break from online learning. The main thing is not to worry – if you have any questions, you can always use the set tasks on Firefly to communicate with your teacher.

### **What do I do if I cannot get logged into a particular lesson on Teams?**

If this is a one-off issue with a lesson, the first thing to do is not to worry. If you can, message your teacher in the set task on Firefly and let them know you had a technical problem for that one lesson; they would appreciate this and of course will understand that at times technology can fail us all. Teachers can post lessons on Firefly or send them to you in a task so no need to worry at all about falling behind.

If there is a persistent issue with not being able to get onto Teams, please email the school and we will offer any IT support that we can. The address is: [msteams@ashmoleacademy.org](mailto:msteams@ashmoleacademy.org)

### **What do I do if I am ill and not able to attend lessons?**

Your parent/carer should inform the school as normal about your absence from school and your teachers will then be notified why you were unable to attend. Teachers will post lessons on Firefly or send them to you in a task, so no need to worry at all about falling behind.

### **I am supposed to have a live lesson with my teacher but they have not sent a live lesson link – what do I do?**

It may be that your teacher is absent from work and therefore unable to set you a live lesson. However, cover work will be set to you by a staff member which will most likely be a set Task on Firefly to complete independently during your allocated lesson time. Not all lessons will be live, so please do not worry, the work is most likely to be set as a task.

If this is a more frequent concern, please email the school referencing the relevant subject so the Head of Department can resolve this for you.

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### **Where can I get online help for IT issues?**

Check out the helpful link posted at the top of the front of your Firefly account. This includes videos on how to use Microsoft Teams and filtering your Firefly, as well as a trouble shooting guide. Check back regularly as this will be updated.

### **How can I help myself keep organised?**

- Try to find a quiet space where you can work effectively and have space to be able to write in your books as you complete the online lessons.
- Follow your timetable and check what lessons you have the night before and ensure you have any relevant books or equipment needed at your work area.
- Teachers will set your live lesson links for the day of your actual lesson. You can use the “filter” function on Firefly to check exactly which lessons you have on the day. Check out the video on the student guide link located on the front page of your Firefly.
- Do not work beyond the lesson times unless you are completing a set piece of assessed homework.

### **How can I ensure I am maintaining my work - life balance?**

- Take regular breaks away from the screen - it may be just to stretch your legs or get a drink of water between lessons, but make sure you get up and away from the screen for at least 5 minutes at the end of each lesson.
- Take your break and lunch times as normal and do something away from your screen such as going for a walk, playing a game or other exercise, reading a book for pleasure, listening to music or chatting with a family member or friend.
- It is a good idea to create your own timetable of what you will be doing in your free time so that there is a variety of different activities.

### **What can I do if I am feeling anxious or worried?**

It is normal to experience times of worry and anxiety, however there are many strategies that help reduce these feelings.

- Talk to a family member at home and explain why you feel worried.
- Make sure you are getting regular exercise, fresh air and eating healthy.
- Practice mindfulness and other techniques for reducing anxiety – <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/anxiety/#what-to-do-about-anxiety>
- Talk to a professional who can offer support and advice - information can be found on our website: <https://www.ashmoleacademy.org/page/?title=Well+Being+and+Mental+Health&pid=769>

I am really struggling and do not know what to do?

- The first thing is not to panic, it's ok.
- Sometimes you might need that extra bit of help. The school can help you.
- We can call you each day to help you get into a routine and make sure you have everything you need and can talk through any issues you might have. If you need support, you can contact the school on: 020 836 12703 or email [staff@ashmoleacademy.org](mailto:staff@ashmoleacademy.org)

If these feelings are overwhelming, please ensure you speak to an adult; they will be able to contact someone who can provide the correct level of support and advice you may need.

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## **The School Day**

### **Years 7-9**

Period 1 - 8.40-9.45am

Period 2 - 9.45-10.45am

*Break Time - 10.45-11.10am*

*Pastoral Time - 11.10-11.30am*

Period 3 - 11.30-12.30pm

*Lunch - 12.30 -1.20pm*

Period 4 – 1.20–2.10pm

Period 5 – 2.10–3.10pm

*PM Registration - students will have form Teams call once a week*

### **Years 10-11**

Period 1 - 8.40-9.45am

Period 2 - 9.45-10.45am

*Pastoral Time - 10.45-11.10am*

*Break Time - 11.10am-11.30am*

Period 3 - 11.30-12.30pm

Period 4 -12.30 -1.20pm

*Lunch – 1.20-2.10pm*

Period 5 – 2.10-3.10pm

*PM Registration - students will have form Teams call once a week*