

6 January 2021

Dear Parent / Carer

Academy Update – 6 January 2021

Firstly I hope that you and your family are well in these uncertain times and I would also like to thank you for your support and understanding over the last 48 hours. As you will be aware the government on Monday evening took the decision to close all schools nationally to students with the exception of the vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. Our staff have worked tirelessly to ensure that we have adapted to the changes in the new guidance and I am writing to outline some key information, but please be aware that you will also receive further communication later this week.

Remote Learning

We have now moved our remote learning onto the Microsoft Teams platform to support and enhance the provision we can offer our students during this lockdown. All students can access Microsoft Teams via our website www.dixonsco.com. We will be providing a full timetable of lessons for all students via our home learning platform and it is important that you encourage your child to engage with this work, through creating a consistent routine. We have asked all students to follow their academy timetable this week. The website has been updated to make access to the home learning as easy as possible, it also includes videos which explain how to use Microsoft Teams on computers, tablets and smart phones as well as guidance of how to deal with issues with passwords. Your child needs their email address and password to access their work. Your child is also able to access Microsoft Office programs through this service.

From Monday 11 January we will be introducing webinars for students alongside the current online learning provision. This will provide an opportunity for students to have live contact with their subject teachers and form tutors and can ask questions relating to their work and well-being. Students **must** attend the form tutor webinars, so your child has contact with their form tutor once per week and important safeguarding, well-being and PSHE messages will be shared. Enclosed with this letter is some key information for Parents with information regarding safeguarding your child whilst working online with specific reference to using Microsoft Teams and our expectations for students during live webinars

All students in the Year 10 and Year 11 have been issued revision/workbooks before the holiday and should have these resources at home. These resources are an additional resource to support your child study for their GCSE examinations. In order to support all our Year 7 – 9 students we have ordered and will be dispatching workbook packs for the EBacc subjects over the next few days for all families. These are again additional resources and we will be communicating a weekly timetable of activities that can be completed from these alongside the home learning which is being completed on Microsoft Teams. If families are experiencing any IT or access issues at home please use these resources to support your child's learning and contact the academy.

Welfare Calls

I would like to make you aware over the coming days and weeks, Form Tutors and our Pastoral Team will be making welfare calls to all students to check they are safe and well and to keep in touch with you, our families. If you have any concerns about your child, as always please email the Form Tutor and Directors of Curriculum Phase / Assistant Director of Curriculum Phase in the first instance. You can also contact the academy using our safeguarding email address safeguarding@dixonsco.com. In order to support us with these phone calls, can families please be aware that you may receive calls from withheld numbers during the hours of 8am and 6pm. It is important to be aware that these calls could well be from the academy to check in on your child's wellbeing.

Support for Families

During the current climate your child will be using technology more frequently than normal. It is important to ensure that whilst your child is using technology and has access to the internet more often that there is additional support and guidance provided to you as parents to keep your child safe whilst online. We are also fully aware that your child may be finding this time particularly challenging or you yourselves as parents and we have created a section of our website that signposts you to support that is available. Please use the following links to access support and services available to families during.

- <https://www.dixonsco.com/about/coronavirus-updates-and-home-learning>
- <https://www.dixonsco.com/about/online-support-for-parents>

Free School Meals

Many families circumstances may change at home as a result of the government announcement and its appropriate at this time to remind families of the criteria below meaning you are eligible for free school meals. Many families may find that in the past they were not eligible but due to a change in circumstances recently they are now eligible to claim. I would strongly advise parents to apply for this if you are eligible. During the academy closure parents that are eligible will receive free school meal vouchers. We will be communicating to these families directly with further information about how these will be distributed and the frequency over the next few days. To apply, check the criteria below and visit please visit the following website below.



- <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/benefits/applying-for-benefits/free-school-meals/>

Free School Meal Eligibility Criteria

- Income Support
- Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit with an annual income of less than £16,190, provided they are not receiving Working Tax Credit
- the 'Guaranteed' element of the State Pension Credit
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (you will need to apply directly to the school or call the Education Service on 01274 439393)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income threshold of less than £7,400

We are also aware that not all families are eligible for free school meals, but may require additional support currently. We have provided a list of local food banks that families can make contact with if this is a service they currently require. You can access list by visiting the following our website <https://www.dixonsco.com/about/coronavirus-updates-and-home-learning>

Communication

We will have a reduced number of staff on site during the course of the academy lockdown and some staff will also be working remotely. All staff can be contacted directly via their academy email address which is available on the academy website and we will respond as quickly as possible. In addition I would like to make you aware of some key contacts that will you will be able to use to obtain support from the school. It is important to note the academy will be staffed during the day and you can also contact by phoning 01274 567281.

	Contact Details	
Year 7	Dawn Kirton DKirton@dixonsco.com	Josh Breeze JBreeze@dixonsco.com
Year 8 and Year 9	Vicky Wright VWright@dixonsco.com	Eesa Iqbal EIqbal@dixonsco.com
Year 10 and Year 11	Shara Hasan-Arshad SHasan@dixonsco.com	Donna Hassan DHassan@dixonsco.com
General Queries	info@dixonsco.com	
Safeguarding Concerns	safeguarding@dixonsco.com	

I would like to thank you all again for your support and please remember as an academy we are here to support all our families and students. If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact the academy by emailing: info@dixonsco.com

Yours sincerely



Jason Patterson
Principal

