

2 February 2021

Dear parent/carers

Changes to the Academy Day and Remote Learning Structure

Once again, I am writing to thank you for your support with our online learning offer over the last few weeks. Our students are working amazingly well and are highly motivated. Attendance at our live lessons is always high, far exceeding national trends and increasingly, students are now submitting more and more work to us, which is so important as we assess their learning and plan for the future.

Recently, I wrote to you to inform you that we would be carrying out a series of phone calls to a large proportion of our families. We wanted to know what you thought of our remote learning offer. Although we are absolutely confident that our remote learning provision is amongst the best in any Academy, we also knew you would have suggestions for ways we could do even better.

Many of you raised the concern of screen time, and it becoming increasingly difficult for your child to maintain concentration across the school day. This is a valid concern. We now know, through a recent announcement from the Prime Minister, that this way of working will continue until **at least 8 March**, but may continue beyond that date. We had already responded to some concerns related to screen time through the release of our Enrichment Calendar, which was attached to my previous letter, and our students have already engaged in some exciting wider opportunities organised by our Faculty Leaders. However, we recognise the need to go even further.

As a result of your feedback we are going to make the following changes, which will be in effect from **8 February**.

- We are going to shorten the length of our lessons to 1 hour 25 minutes, in order to provide our students with a proper break in between each live lesson. This means that our lessons will start and end at slightly different times
- Every week, one afternoon will be a “Screen-Free” session. Students will have designated time away from the screen to complete an activity of their choice.

A copy of the new Academy day, and the “Screen-Free” activity charts are attached to this letter.

For the “Screen-Free” activity sessions, we have provided a series of suggested activities that your child can complete. All activities link to our core values of **Integrity, Ambition and Excellence**. Your child can send an example of evidence or a message to their Tutor outlining their activity and will be awarded with 10 recognition points for each activity completed, and a further 50 points if they complete a full sequence.

As part of this change, I would like to be clear that our expert teachers are reshaping their planning to ensure that your child still receives the excellent standard of online education that they have received so far. However, we do hope that you welcome the above changes as we look to further support our students and families during this lockdown period. It is very important to us that your child not only receives the best possible education, but that their well-being is at the centre of our thinking. We also want you to know that we take your constructive feedback seriously, and as in this case, adapt our plans where it is right to do so.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding any aspect of this letter, please do not hesitate to phone the Academy office, or email me directly: m.brett@dukeries.attrust.org.uk.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "M. Brett". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'M' and a stylized 'Brett'.

Mr Mike Brett
Assistant Principal