



22nd October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As you may be aware, the Government has asked all schools to update their remote learning plans so that any child who cannot attend school because of COVID-19 does not miss out on their learning.

This letter explains our updated plans for remote learning for students who have to self-isolate, or where local or national restrictions mean that they need to stay at home. We have also included a copy of the Remote Learning Plan and a guide to Microsoft Teams.

Our remote learning plan at St Nicholas

To streamline access to home learning we have introduced Microsoft Teams at St. Nicholas Catholic High School. All remote learning lessons are run on the Microsoft Teams platform which is significantly more secure than other platforms from external interference. We will still continue to use Ruler as a platform for setting home work in school but all remote learning will now be placed in Microsoft Teams. **Consent for your child to participate in Microsoft Teams is included in the form at the bottom of this letter.**

What is Microsoft Teams?

Microsoft Teams is an online platform that incorporates resource banks, interactive learning and a range of other features. 'Teams' can be accessed via a laptop, tablet or mobile phone.

- Teachers can use it to set structured tasks while the school is closed or if students are having to self-isolate at home.
- It provides free access to Microsoft educational software (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Sway, Forms etc). It is also accessible via Mobile devices using the student's own school login account.
- It will encourage our students to be more digitally literate – "future proofing".
- Currently, many places of work, colleges and universities are working with Microsoft Teams or similar products.

What to expect:

If your child is completing their learning remotely they can expect new work and assignments in line with the curriculum that would ordinarily be experienced in the classroom. There will be a variety of ways in which students will be engaging with their learning, and individual departments will decide which activities best support their curriculum schemes of learning in line with Government expectations and guidance.



Where possible, work should be completed in student exercise books / folders unless otherwise stated within the instructions. If students do not have their exercise books, students should complete this on paper and stick in their books/folders on their return to school.

Departments may wish for students to engage through 'Live Chat' during a streamed lesson. There may also be occasions where they wish to see the students and ask that cameras and/or microphones are turned on. This is to address common misconceptions, to question students and ascertain understanding, to provide feedback and to challenge students during their online learning.

If the school is advised by Public Health England and/or the Government to close to whole class isolation, whole Year Group isolation/partial closure to more than one group or full school closure, lessons may be recorded. This is to enable students to access their lesson at a different time to that specified on their timetable. This caters for different family circumstances and can allow students to have full access to their learning at such times. Only students in that lesson will be able to access the recording. Meeting recordings will be available in the meeting chat for a period of 21 days after the meeting. After 21 days, the meeting recordings will no longer be available.

What you can do to help

We appreciate that if this situation arises, it may present some challenges for you. We kindly ask for your support so that we can continue to provide high-quality education for your child during this time.

As parents, you are not expected to become teachers. Simply providing your children with some structure at home will help them.

- Encourage your child to establish a routine each day. They should follow their normal school timetable and complete set work and participate in live lessons at the same time that their lesson would have been in school.
- Create a school environment - a quiet area to work. If mobile phones are not required for online learning it may be beneficial to have a mobile free zone.
- Read through the Teams guidance with your child. This will also be available on our website. This includes everything you would expect, from submitting assignments, accessing resources, to interacting with teachers. Students in KS3 have received instructions on how to access Teams in their Computing lessons. A guide is attached for students in KS4 & 5.
- Wherever possible, your child should complete their timetabled lessons in the same way they would if they were attending school.
- Help your child by going through the set tasks and checking they understand what needs to be done. Remember you are there to support, not to do the work.



- Encourage your child to use their student planner to record the work they have been set, this will help with organisation.

What we expect from your child

In order to participate in Microsoft Teams, your child must adhere to the Protocols stated below. **Consent to these protocols is required via the Microsoft Forms link at the bottom of this letter.** If you do not agree to these protocols, your child can not participate in the Microsoft Teams and paper work packs will be provided.

Protocols

1. The Microsoft Teams invite for lessons will not be published on line but will be sent directly to students via their individual school email address and added to the Teams posts. My child will not share this link with any other persons.
2. My child will use Microsoft Teams or their school email account to communicate with teachers and keep any communication in line with our ICT Plan. They must not use personal email accounts.
3. My child will join these sessions with microphones muted and video cameras turned off
4. My child understands that questions and answers take place by raising their virtual hand and waiting for the teacher to ask them to unmute their microphone or through written chat. Voice and Chat questions can be heard or read by other members of the Team in the live lesson.
5. My child understands that any communication that they make will follow the usual expectations of behaviour at St Nicholas Catholic High School and will be in line with the ICT Acceptable Use Policy they sign at the beginning of each academic year
6. My child understands that they will not undertake third party recordings of the events.
7. My child understands that the lesson via Teams is private and cannot be recorded or shared. All content is subject to the same policies regarding behaviour and use of technology that we have in school.
8. My child will:
 - Follow the 4 Rs at all time
 - Conduct themselves as expected in a regular lesson or classroom in line with our expectations as Catholic school community.
 - Make sure that all communications, including forum posts, with students, teachers or others are appropriate and sensible
 - Send and receive messages to do with school purposes only
 - Send nothing that can be seen as illegal, rude, insulting or that contravenes the school behavior Policy guidelines and expectations
 - Attend live lessons on time where possible
 - Refrain from personal comments towards other students
 - Respect everyone's opinion



- Not generate comments or content that hinders the good order of the session e.g. unnecessary messaging in the chat
 - Allow the teacher to lead the lesson
 - Follow the guidance outlined at the back of the Student User Guide
9. My child understands that any failure to engage with these protocols may result in the withdrawal of this method of remote learning at any time. Further discussions will then take place with parents and carers in line with our school Behaviour Plan
 10. My child understands that a teacher reserves the right to remove them should their behaviour or any other household member cause concern or disruption to the learning experience.

We recognise that the availability of digital devices at home will vary from household to household. With many parents and carers working from home, access to devices could be limited. We also understand that some households may not have access to devices and in this instance, hard paper copies of resources will be made available for your child on request.

Therefore, to support us with our logistical operations, it is really important that you take a moment to complete the survey using the link below. As mentioned above, this form also includes consents and protocols that you and your child need to agree to in order for your child to engage with Microsoft Teams.

Please can you complete this form, using the link below, by Friday 30th October at the latest.

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=TQCEKBxgKE67QeEw___TRKZA2IbYo7NJjdWCtLg-K-tUQzRVQk1IM0VFOVI3RFZJMzBBRke1NjJSMS4u

We will also be hosting a live event on Thursday 5th November 6-7pm to explain more about the use of Teams and give you a better understanding of the types of activities students will be asked to undertake. A link for this will be sent after Half Term.

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the school through the usual channels.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mr Wycherley

Assistant Headteacher for Teaching & Learning