

Maiden Beech Academy

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Friday 5th February 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

I hope you remain safe and well.

I thought it would be helpful to write again and share some important reminders and updates with you.

HALF TERM AND INSET DAY (FRIDAY 12TH FEBRUARY)

Please remember that next **Friday, 12th February, is an INSET day**; the school will be closed to all pupils, including those children who have been attending recently. Staff will use this time to plan future remote learning activities, assess children's work, and complete mandatory online training.

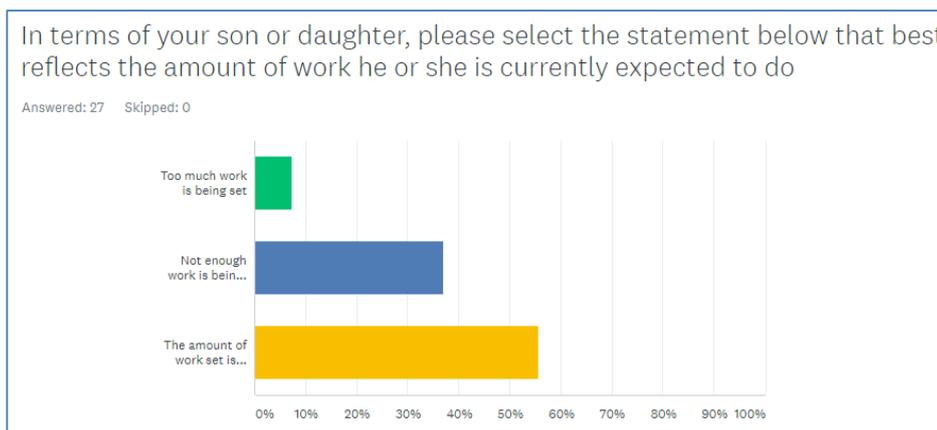
Half-term holiday: The school will also be closed week beginning 15th February for the half-term holiday, reopening from **7:30 AM on Monday 22nd February** to children eligible to attend. Please can parents of children currently attending school inform us of the days/times their son or daughter will be attending after the break by **Thursday 11th February**? This will enable us to update the registers for the week beginning 22nd February. After half-term, we will continue to offer wraparound care from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM to support critical workers.

Please note that no online lessons and activities will take place during half-term week to enable the children and staff to have a well-earned break.

REMOTE LEARNING

Unfortunately, as I write, we are experiencing internet connectivity issues, which appear to be due to a nationwide issue with our Internet Service Provider (ISP). This means that staff and children working in school cannot access the internet and, therefore, Microsoft Teams; however, staff and children working at home can connect depending on their ISP – as I commented last week, don't you just love technology! Hopefully, the issue will be resolved ASAP, and I would like to thank you for your patience and understanding (again!).

Thank you to all of you that completed the online survey re: remote learning. The following graphs show the results:

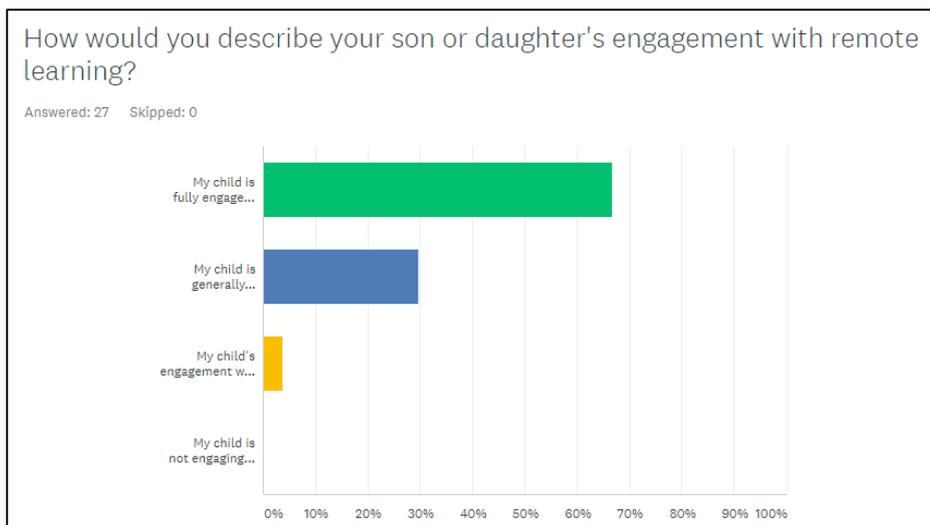


INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



CHARTER STANDARD SCHOOLS





Interestingly, the majority of responses were from parents with children in years 7 and 8 (51% of respondents were Year 7 Parents), implying that there may be a difference of opinion in regard to the appropriate quantity of work provided for different age children.

We were very pleased to see that over two thirds of you who responded to the survey feel your son or daughter is fully engaged with his or her remote learning.

From the responses received, we have drawn the following conclusions:

- The majority of children are engaged with online learning.
- The amount of work set/ number of online sessions appears right for primary aged children
- We may need to increase the amount of work/number of timetabled sessions for secondary aged children.

In terms of action, revised timetables for years 7 and 8 will be uploaded next week, and the new sessions will commence when we return after half-term (from Monday 22nd February).

In the interim, please make use of the excellent resources provided online by the Oak National Academy. The Key Stage 3 resources can be found here: <https://classroom.thenational.academy/subjects-by-key-stage/key-stage-3>

I would encourage your son or daughter to choose a subject they are interested in and to look at the various courses on offer. These are high quality resources that many schools are using and the contents relates directly to National Curriculum objectives.

Laptops: I am pleased to say that we have now sent home 18 additional laptops this week to support online learning and are in the process of issuing more to enable all children/families to have access to online events.

We have also been gifted second-hand devices such as i-Pads, Kindles, and laptops, which we have been able to distribute as well. A huge thank you to those parents who have supported this initiative; if you do have a device at home that is now redundant, it would be gratefully received.

Thanks to the BTCT and parental support, we are close to achieving our goal of all children having access to remote learning and ensuring a parity of provision between children at home and children attending school.

LATERAL FLOW TESTING (LFT)

We are now regularly testing staff on-site using LFT kits to identify potential asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 and are now in a position to roll this programme out to Year 7 and 8 children currently attending school (please see the separate letter sent home today with Key Stage 3 children currently in school, which also has attached an information leaflet and a consent form).

HPV LETTER – YEAR 8 PARENTS ONLY

Please see a separate letter re: HPV vaccinations for Year 8 pupils uploaded to the Parent Portal and Academy website today.

POTENTIAL REGORANSIATION OF SCHOOLS IN CREWKERENE AND ILMINSTER

As stated many times before, I would urge all parents to read the information available on the Somerset County Council website (link below) and to complete the online questionnaire, which has now been amended to allow multiple responses to Question 6. If you responded to the questionnaire before **Wednesday 27th January**, you may wish to complete the survey again and/or email your response directly to the consultation team using the following email address: crewkerneilminsterschools@somerset.gov.uk

Whilst decision makers have categorically stated that responses to the first consultation will be taken into account when a final decision is made, I would urge all parents to respond directly to the second consultation as well, to fully ensure that your views are ‘heard’.

The consultation documentation and a link to the questionnaire can be accessed using the following link: <https://somerset.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/CISP2/consultationHome>

I would also urge all parents to respond to the independent survey that is being conducted by the Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust (BTCT), which can be accessed at: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/55JM5BL

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Have a lovely weekend



Carl Winch
Head teacher