



April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

As the new term gets under way, I hope you are managing to access work for your children and that you are also able to let us know if you need support under these challenging circumstances. Below you will find an update on the information I sent to you last week, some is repeated but we are finding out about new sources of support daily so I hope it is helpful to keep you updated in this way. You will find the following updates below:

- **Education for your child during COVID-19 – our virtual school online support and workpacks, new national resources and our emergency provision in school**
- **Free School Meals and community support – update on FSM vouchers and wider community support for food supplies**
- **Support if you are struggling – how we can help you access support from our Locality Hub**

### Education for your child

#### **Colmers Online Resources**

Our staff are continuing to set work for your child every day, based around a timetable structure of four 1-hour slots per day. It may be that it suits you and your child brilliantly to stick to the routine of these “lessons” but it is also completely fine to be flexible – there may be days and times that the routine doesn’t work. The beauty of having all of the work on our portal is your child can catch up at any stage if they have missed anything. Each day a lead teacher for the timetabled slot will send an email with the details of the work directly to students and they are encouraged to email that teacher if they have any issues or queries. Staff will do their very best to respond within 24 hours.

We know how stressful it can be to make sure your child is completing school work: your support with this is greatly appreciated and every bit of learning counts. But please be reassured that **well-being comes first** and we will do our very best to help all our students catch up on work missed when we return.

#### **Colmers Work Packs**

If you have requested a work pack because you do not have access to the internet, you may receive a message this week about a slot in which you can collect these. If you are unable to collect, we will then post out to you. Please contact main reception if you are unable to access our online work and require a work pack.

#### **New National Learning Services**

The government has launched two new services to support children learning at home:

**The Oak National Academy**, <https://www.thenational.academy/>: this is a great initiative by a group of teachers to provide online lessons every day. The lessons are designed to work equally well on either a laptop or a smartphone. Your child can benefit from extra study if they are interested in exploring the lessons themselves – it is all completely free and can be accessed directly from the website by you as parents or by your children without needing any individual log in details.

**BBC Bitesize**: the BBC has launched a series of lessons for students every day that will work really well to complement the work our teachers are setting our students. I think it will be especially helpful when access to the internet or a laptop is limited and will provide some variety for children in the types of learning opportunities that are available.

**Internet and Device Access**: We are continuing to explore how we can support children and families who do not have access to internet or a laptop / smartphone device. I was delighted to hear that the government are going to be helping with this but we have yet to receive any details and I will keep you posted once we have more information.

### **Colmers Emergency School Provision**

Our in-school provision remains open to the small number of students who need to be in school, either because they are children of Key Workers or because of very specific family situations that require that support. If your circumstances have changed and you need to access this provision, for example you are taking up work as a Key Worker, please contact school reception and we can make the necessary arrangements. We are committed to supporting all families that need this provision but must stick to the government guidance that only those students for whom it is absolutely essential should be in school.

### **Free School Meals and Food Hub Support**

Free School Meals vouchers arrived with us today and will be issued via email today with a small number being sent by post.

We now know of two wider support services able to deliver food parcels to families in need:

**South Birmingham Community Food Hub** is working in partnership with FoodCycle to distribute food parcels weekly in B29, B30, B31, B32, B38 and B45. You can find details of the group on Facebook and can ring directly on 0751413166 or 07514131667. A huge amount of work is going on to ensure food reaches families in need so do check out this opportunity if you are struggling.

**Newstarts Charity** is supporting families in the B45 and B31-35 postcodes by providing food parcels that have sufficient for 3 meals a day for all in the household. Please visit the **loverubery.com** website and follow the link to request support.

### **Support if you are Struggling**

I know how difficult it can be to reach out and ask for help but many children and families will face particular struggles and difficulties during these unprecedented times. Schools have been asked to help children and families by referring request for support to our new Locality Hub. The Locality Hub is intended as a "one stop shop". We can support you by making a referral, for example if you need help with providing essentials to your family or if you need additional support in relation to mental health issues, domestic violence, bereavement, or any other support at this time. Please contact your child's Head of Year (emails are below) or our Safeguarding and Early Help leads who will help. Alternatively, contact our school main reception on 0121 453 1778 and we will make sure the right person gets back to you as soon as possible.

Year 7: Mr Butt, [sbutt@colmers.school](mailto:sbutt@colmers.school)

Year 8: Mr Williams, [awilliams@colmers.school](mailto:awilliams@colmers.school)

Year 9: Mr Bradley, [pbradley@colmers.school](mailto:pbradley@colmers.school)

Year 10: Mrs Wilcox, [lwilcox@colmers.school](mailto:lwilcox@colmers.school)

Year 11: Mr Bennett, [abennett@colmers.school](mailto:abennett@colmers.school)

Years 12 & 13 : Mrs Thompson & Mr Love, [mthompson@colmers.school](mailto:mthompson@colmers.school) & [tlove@colmers.school](mailto:tlove@colmers.school)

Safeguarding & Early Help: Mr Boardman, [cboardman@colmers.school](mailto:cboardman@colmers.school) & Mrs Brookes, [sbrookes@colmers.school](mailto:sbrookes@colmers.school)

With very best wishes to you and yours,



Emma Leaman  
Headteacher

#stayhome #staysafe #savelives