



Blackminster Middle School

School Bulletin

Bulletin 15-01-21

Dear parents and carers,

We're coming to the end of our second week of lockdown, and I hope that you and your child are settling into the new routines. The feedback we've had is that the new system of setting work daily is much more manageable for parents and students, and we've seen a lot of excellent engagement from students in what is a very difficult time, so students, families and staff can feel proud of what we are achieving together.

I've got a number of updates and reminders to share with you.

"Live" tutor times

Our live tutor times started very well this week, so these will continue, providing children (and staff!) with some face to face contact. Year 6 will meet on Wednesdays, Year 7 on Thursdays and Year 8 on Fridays from 1:45 to 2:15. Students will see the link as an event in their Office 365 calendars, and just click the link to join. There will be a reminder on SMHW, as well as a short tutorial video to show how to join the session.

Preventing the spread of COVID-19

It is very important that that pupils, staff and other adults do not come into the school if they have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms or have tested positive in at least the last 10 days. If anyone in your household tests positive, members of their household (including any siblings) should self-isolate for 10 days from the day after the individual tested positive.

Facemasks

I've shared this video before, but it's a helpful reminder about how to wear a face covering safely.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Tv2BVN_WTk&t=28s

Keeping up with reading

If a pupil has read and quizzed on all their school library books, they have a number of options.

1- They can read books they have at home. AR bookfinder www.arbookfind.co.uk can be used to check the book is on the AR system and can be quizzed. Make sure the title is typed in exactly as it can be a bit fussy. Brand new releases may not have been put on the system yet.

2- Pupils can read eBooks via their usual supplier. Titles can be checked on AR bookfinder as above and quizzed on as normal.

3- Pupils can borrow books and eBooks from Worcestershire and Warwickshire libraries. Ctrl and click on the links for more information. Pupils can join as digital members if they do not already have a library card. Membership and borrowing are free.

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/libraries

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/libraries

At the end of the day, it is better for pupils to read something than not read at all. If they do not have access to the internet, they can read magazines, newspapers and non-AR books that might be at home. Just keep reading!

Parent View

We are always seeking to improve the quality of what we do here at Blackminster, and feedback really helps us to do this. If you'd like to give your views on the school to Ofsted, you can use their Parent View system. The link is here <https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Sumdog

We have bought a new subscription for the whole school, to a website called Sumdog. It allows students to play games online against their friends (if they know their username), their classes or other children around the world. There are Maths and English games to play. Players win virtual coins and can personalise their avatar and house.

The website is www.sumdog.com The school code is blackm

Students will need their username and password. Mrs Pitkeathly has these for the whole school. Students should message her on Show My Homework for their details.

When students first go on the website, they have to complete an assessment. This is the boring bit but it sets their skills to the right level for each individual. Once they have done this part, students can play games.

Keeping in touch

If you'd like to contact teachers, you can either message via SMHW or email. All school email addresses take the same format – it's FirstinitialFamilyname@blackminster.worcs.sch.uk. So, for example, I'm Linda McQuone so my email address is lmcquone@blackminster.worcs.sch.uk. Our system sends messages into "quarantine" so staff might not see them until the next day, but will respond within a couple of days at most.

I'd like to encourage parents and carers to follow us on Facebook, where you'll find news and insights into Blackminster life, as well as celebrations of our lovely students and their successes. We hope it might give you some smiles in these difficult times.

Kind regards,



Linda McQuone

Acting Executive Headteacher