



ADVANTAGE
SCHOOLS

www.advantageschools.co.uk

5th January 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Announcement on nationwide lockdown

I hope that you all had a relaxing and restorative Christmas break, and I wish you a happy and healthy 2021.

I am writing to you to update you with our planning and precautions we are taking in the light of the Prime Minister's announcement yesterday.

Last night, the Prime Minister announced that schools will close to pupils for face-to-face teaching until at least the February half term.

The new measures include the immediate closure of all schools.

The new strain of the virus, that is significantly more infectious, means that we must now all play our part by once again staying at home.

From today, our schools are closed to most pupils. Please note that this means, regardless of parents' occupation, that **if it is at all possible for children to remain at home, they should be.**

This is so that we can to the maximum extent possible slow the spread of the virus and ensure that our health services do not get overwhelmed.

Online Provision:

We will move to remote learning from Wednesday as previously planned. However, this will now be for an extended period of time for **all pupils**. You should be aware of the platform on which this is provided, and pupils will be familiar with this.

Pupils must electronically 'sign in' each day and complete the work set. There will be a mixture of provision, and we will have very high expectations of the children.

Children of key workers:

We are committed to establishing provision for pupils whose parents are at the frontline of the fight against Covid-19.

T: 01234 332277 E: info@advantageschools.co.uk Advantage Schools, 12-16 Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9AD

ASPIRATION • RESPECT • HONESTY

We will do all we can to stay open for the children of key workers and children with certain needs. If your work is critical to the COVID-19 response, and you cannot keep your child safe at home then your children will be prioritised for provision.

Please note that provision will effectively be childcare. The work that pupils complete will be the same work that has been set online.

If your child has an EHCP **and** you are intending for your child to continue attending school, please email keyworker@advantageschools.co.uk or telephone your child's school.

If you are a worker critical to the fight against Covid-19 **and** you cannot safely look after your child at home, please email keyworker@advantageschools.co.uk with your child's name, class, and your occupation.

Free School Meals

We also intend to try to provide for pupils who are entitled to free school meals but are not allowed to come to school. We are working hard on this and will be in touch later in the week.

If you are currently in the process of applying for free school meals **or** if you currently qualify for free school meals but haven't advised us, please advise us on meals@advantageschools.co.uk or telephone your child's school. **You do not need to inform us if your child already receives Free School Meals.**

Examinations:

On the prospect of disruption to SATs and GCSEs, the Prime Minister said that there would be changes, but we should be clear that there was no announcement that examinations were 'cancelled'. There will be some form of replacement. We will communicate with you in good time as we know more. It is vitally important that all pupils, including those in years 11 and 6, work to the very best of their capabilities.

We know that our online provision, the attitudes of our pupils, and the support of our parents is the very best. While this situation is far from ideal, our pupils are in the best position, with the best support, to achieve despite the setbacks. Please do stay in touch with us so that we can work through any difficulties together.

Should you have any queries, please contact your child's school on info@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk.

Colleagues at Elstow and Bedford Free School have been absolutely phenomenal throughout the pandemic and I know they will continue to provide excellent education and to support our pupils and families. I also know that they appreciate the kind words that many of you have sent to them.

Throughout the term of this pandemic, your patience, understanding and support have been outstanding, and again you are being tested. Whilst I believe we are entering the toughest phase of the crisis so far, we can take confidence and reassurance from how we have coped up to this point. I will continue to keep you up to date with the key developments and to explain any decisions made. If the new lockdown causes your family significant difficulties, please do get in touch with your school. We really do consider ourselves to be one big family and I hope that we can look forward now that there is a

viable vaccine, and that its deployment is on the horizon. In the meantime, I sincerely hope that you and your loved ones remain in optimum health.

Very best wishes,



Stuart Lock
CEO
Advantage Schools

PS: Online Learning Reminders

Please ask your son or daughter to check their school Google login

The majority of pupils have logged into Google Classroom on several occasions during the autumn term and should know their passwords.

If they need any support with their login, please contact Mrs Logan by email on elogan@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

We understand that not having access to IT equipment such as laptops can make remote learning more challenging. If you need support with this, we have a limited amount of equipment which we may be able to loan to you. Please email:

info@bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

What should pupils do each day?

- Wake up bright and early and follow their normal school day routine
- Go to classroom.google.com and sign in using their school-based Google account
- Take the Online Morning Register **before 9 am**
- Look at their timetable for the day and check those classrooms on Google
- Complete the work that has been set by teachers, sticking to their school timetable where they can and taking their breaks

Full written and video guidance for pupils about how to use Google Classroom can be found on the school website:

<https://www.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk/covid-19/>

How do pupils log in to Google Classroom?





To log in to google:

[Gmail](#) [Images](#)



[Sign in](#)

- 1) Go to classroom.google.com (or any other google website).

- 2) Click 'sign in' in the top-right corner. If you are already signed in to a Google account on that computer, click the initial instead.
- 3) If you are logging in for the first time on that device, enter your username and password. If you have logged in before,     select your **school** Google account.

Username = your school ID [number@student.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk](mailto:001234@student.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk)

e.g. 001234@student.bedfordfreeschool.co.uk

Password = the password you use to log on to school computers, or whatever you have changed it to since.

- 4) Whenever you are using Google for anything related to school, check that you are logged in to your **school** Google account.

If you are logged in to a personal Google account, you won't be able to access any school work or the register. Google has a habit of switching between accounts, so if something doesn't work check that you are logged in to the right account first!

How do pupils take the Online Morning Register?

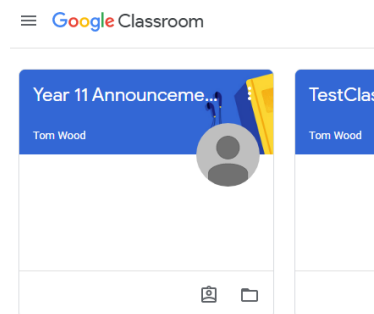
Go to your classes in Google Classroom.

Open the class 'Year 7/8/9/10 Announcements'

At the top of the Class Stream, you will see a message about the register with a Google Form attached.

Click the form to open it.

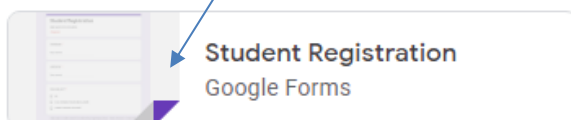
Fill in your details and submit the form when done.



Below is the Online Morning Register. Click on the form and fill it in.

You need to take OMR before 9 am on any day where you are absent for reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you are absent for any other reason, you should not complete this register - please follow the normal absence procedure and have a parent ring the school.



Will 'live' online teaching take place?

We expect that some 'live' online teaching will be used to deliver explanations of new content. This will take place on Google Meet. Further details and guidance for pupils can be found in the Google Classroom Student Guidance booklet on the school website.

It is important that pupils follow the code of conduct for online lessons at all times:

Code of Conduct for Online Lessons

When taking part in an online lesson I agree to:

Before and after the lesson

-keep my login details and password safe and never share them with anyone else

During the lesson, at all times

-conduct myself appropriately and follow my teacher's instructions, in the same way I would in a real classroom

-be polite and show respect to my teacher and fellow students and never do, or help someone else to do, anything which could make them feel uncomfortable, threatened or unsafe, or disrupt the lesson in any way

-to the meeting being recorded, for everyone's safety

-leave my camera switched on and facing me so that my teacher can communicate with me

-mute or unmute my microphone if asked to so that I can communicate with my teacher

-never share my screen unless directed to by the teacher

-never display an inappropriate or offensive profile picture

-dress appropriately for the meeting. I won't wear pyjamas, anything revealing or anything with an offensive image or slogan

-take part in the meeting in a public part of the house. I won't take part in the meeting in my or another bedroom.

-report any inappropriate behavior I see or hear to a member of staff

-work hard and be nice

At the start of the lesson

-have my camera switched on and respond clearly to the register so my teacher knows I am in the lesson

-mute my microphone once I've responded to the register

At the end of the lesson

-leave the lesson immediately when asked to by my teacher