



Charles Darwin School

Operated by the Charles Darwin Academy Trust

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Teaching and Learning Expectations during School Closure Period- Students and Families

Keeping our students “Connected with Learning “

Clearly, we are in new and uncharted territory with regard to learning at present and this arrangement is likely to continue for some time. It is sensible therefore to outline the principles and expectations that underpin our approach to this new and challenging situation.

Here are some points to help guide students and families:

- **It is difficult to make lasting plans.** Accept this and recognise that anything positive in terms of learning is a step in the right direction. The resources, websites and activities made available to students will have given them the opportunity to do some learning at home. It may not be perfect and it may well develop over time, but right now everyone is doing the best they can in a situation that developed very quickly. It certainly won't be 'business as usual' and we cannot expect the learning to be the same as would have happened in school.
- **Students and teachers will not be as productive in this environment.** Setting some learning activities for young people is desirable but it is essential that expectations are realistic. What can be achieved may vary over time, depending how the impact of the virus unfolds, but it is important to recognise that the normal curriculum cannot be followed in the usual way.
- **We can't expect parents to 'home school' children** but we can try to give activities, guidance and support that will help everyone to do the best they can within the situation as it unfolds. Many families will of course have some of their own ideas of providing opportunities for young people to learn a new skill; as well as the household chores they can help with on a regular basis where appropriate- this is all learning!
- **It is unrealistic for all submitted work to be marked in detail by teaching staff.** Teachers will aim to tell students when setting the work, the level of marking or feedback they can expect on each piece. If it is not to be marked, students should keep work neatly in a folder for when they return to school. Not all work can be marked of course and we need to remember a lot of the work set is to keep young people, "Connected with Learning" rather than being taught and assessed in the normal way.
- **A great deal of work will focus on consolidation, revisiting or relearning of prior content,** rather than introducing lots of new content. Consolidation of prior learning, however, is likely to be beneficial. We know that what students store in long term memory can help them to learn more, so consolidation is not wasted time or a lack of 'progress'. This is potentially a good opportunity to help students become more confident in key aspects of the curriculum and thus lay solid foundations for when school resumes.
- **This is an opportunity for students to discover a wider curriculum.** Not all the learning tasks set have to be focused entirely on the sorts of things that would appear in end of topic test or examinations. Setting suitable films to watch, books to read, documentaries to watch

- on iPlayer, YouTube, linked articles will all help students remain “Connected with Learning” and broaden their knowledge - what is sometimes termed “cultural capital”
- **Assessment** during this period will mainly focus on low-stakes tests to help students understand their own learning. GCSE Pod, Seneca, SMHW quizzes and other packages provide this facility with self-marking and feedback built in.
- **The amount of time** sent per day naturally will vary depending on students’ year group. We do not believe it is helpful to set work at the time of each lesson during the week. Families and teaching staff have their own personal circumstances to manage at this challenging time. It would seem reasonable therefore, for students to spend between 2-3 hours each day doing some work set by school during term time. It is unlikely that any significant work will be set during school holiday time, for example Easter.