

# Lincoln Castle Academy



22nd January 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

## Remote Education

Lincoln Castle Academy's revised arrangements for remote education began on 11<sup>th</sup> January, in line with the Government's ambitious expectations. Their guidance states:

*"The remote education should be equivalent in length to the teaching your child would normally get in school and will include both recorded or live direct teaching time, and time for pupils to complete tasks and assignments independently. The amount of remote education should be a minimum of 5 hours a day for students at secondary school."*

As we approach the third week of home education, this letter provides further details on the key decisions taken at Lincoln Castle Academy.

1. Students receive a blend of 'live lessons' and independent tasks (approximately 50% of each). *This decision has received positive feedback from students and parents. They tell us they appreciate our attempts to vary the 'daily diet' and, where possible, provide activities that are not entirely reliant on screen time. Student wellbeing and 'screen fatigue' underpin this decision. Inevitably there will be some days that are 'heavier' than others, but most should include a balance of activities.*
2. We require students to have their video function on for 'live lessons.' *This allows us to ensure only our students are 'attending' the lesson, an important safeguarding measure. It also allows students to 'connect' with their classmates & teacher and interact more effectively. This decision is underpinned by our commitment to support student wellbeing; during this lengthy lockdown children's mental health is a very significant concern and research shows face to face interaction is an important way to reduce feelings of isolation.*
3. We require students to attend Tutor Time twice per week. *In our academy, relationships are fundamental and chief amongst your child's teachers, is their tutor. By providing tutor sessions each week, your child can see their form group, talk openly within a trusted familiar peer group and provide their tutor with important feedback, including how they are coping with the demands of remote education. The frequency of Tutor Time prevents small 'niggles' becoming bigger, allowing adults to address them quickly.*
4. Year groups benefit from regular assemblies. *Frequent assemblies provide students with a sense of belonging, reinforcing the year group identity. Whilst they provide an opportunity to reinforce important messages, themes are deliberately positive, with role models and aspirational messages.*
5. Students are encouraged to 'Drop everything and Read' (DEAR)

*We believe there is no better way to escape than to read a fabulous book. For students who prefer non-fiction, every LCA student can now access our school subscription to 'The Day', a daily online newspaper for teenagers focusing on the big issues that are transforming our world. It is simply spectacular, and we urge you to take a look.*

## Feedback & Reflection

In the initial days we worked to strengthen the security of our remote platform and teachers devised new and innovative ways to engage students. We also worked to adapt many aspects of school life, as illustrated by this snapshot of last week:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 600 live lessons taught</li> <li>✓ 6650 reward points issued</li> <li>✓ 150 laptops provided to students</li> <li>✓ Over 600 tutor phone calls made</li> <li>✓ Over 200 Covid tests conducted in our Test Centre</li> <li>✓ 120 Welfare calls &amp; 50 SEND calls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Over 70 students in school for 'Essential School Support'</li> <li>✓ Advice &amp; guidance for students facing exams with 7 planned vocational examinations sat</li> <li>✓ 45 Facebook posts resulting in 1700 Facebook views and 6000 post engagements</li> <li>✓ Over 250 phone calls and emails providing IT Support to students</li> </ul>
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As we work to refine our provision, we are using feedback from students, teachers and support staff. Our Year Group Councils and Grand Student Council met this week and several of their requests have already been implemented. From Monday we will be implementing lesson 'changeover' time to allow for a short comfort break, adding time limits to all task set and, where appropriate, reducing the volume of work set.

We now invite parents to complete our short survey to inform future improvements:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/R95DZ3F>. Please keep in mind we are *required* to meet the minimum expectations provided by the Government (including the expectation of 5 hours remote education per day) and that our usual methods of assessing individual needs are not always possible when setting work remotely.

### Coming next...

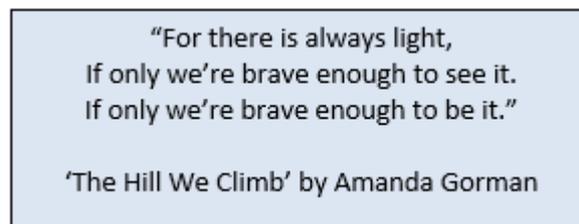
- A Parents' Guide to Remote Education will be published on our website.
- A fortnightly 'Student Engagement Report', beginning 25<sup>th</sup> January will enable parents to monitor their child's attendance at 'live' lessons, along with their completion of independent work. This feedback will allow us to work together to ensure all students access their full entitlement to education.
- Food vouchers will be supplied to all families eligible for support on a fortnightly basis. We have received confirmation that this scheme will continue to be funded through the February half term holiday.
- Parents' Evenings and Sixth Form Interviews will take place remotely.
- The P.E. Department continue their '#Around the World in 31 Days' challenge, inspiring students, staff (and parents?) to get active whilst raising money for our LCA Food Bank. You can find out how to join their view their impressive fitness challenges here: <https://youtu.be/R4XYJ2DaWQc>

This is an immensely challenging time for us all, but it is especially challenging for parents. If your family is experiencing financial challenges, we can provide a food and care package on request.

I would like to thank you parents and our students for embracing remote education, we have been impressed with the adaptability and maturity shown by our students. By becoming actively involved in the online lessons and keeping up to date with work set, your child will continue to make progress during this period. If you are concerned about your ability to support your child with remote education, please get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Laming  
Headteacher



### Useful links:

- For all enquiries & food & care packages: [enquiries@lincolncastleacademy.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@lincolncastleacademy.co.uk)/ 01522 529203
- Information about remote education & to access 'The Day': <https://www.lincolncastleacademy.co.uk/wordpress/>
- <https://www.lincolncastleacademy.co.uk/wordpress/lca-learning-apps-support/>
- [What parents and carers need to know about early years providers, schools and colleges \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk).