



Wednesday 6th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Thank you for your support with what has been an unsettled start to the new term, particularly following Monday evening's government announcement about a national lockdown. We dealt with two scenarios over the Christmas holiday only to be given another to sort overnight. We are particularly grateful for the kind words we have received and for your understanding given the rapidly changing circumstances. I plan to outline in this letter our plans until February half term.

School Places – Critical Workers and Vulnerable Students

We are keen to support all parents/carers who fall into the critical worker group and those students considered to be vulnerable – please refer to the government's guidance by clicking [here](#) to check if you are eligible to request a place in school.

We understand that working patterns may change by week and therefore request that if you require a place for your child in school that you email schoolclosures@mrus.co.uk by midday on a Thursday for the following week.

If your working plans change last minute then please email mark.rutherford@mrus.co.uk so we can consider if we can accommodate your child at short notice.

Expectations – Students in School

If your child is in school then we have the following expectations:

- They **must** attend for the full school day unless they need to leave early to attend a medical or dental appointment.
- If your child is unable to attend on a day we were expecting them then please contact us on 01234 290200 so we have an accurate record of attendance. We have a requirement to monitor attendance and also need to consistently monitor our group sizes and numbers. **It is imperative that you do not send your child into school if they are ill in any way.** If your child becomes ill during the school day then they will be sent home immediately.
- Students are to arrive for 8.30am and go straight to their designated room for registering before accessing the remote learning work set, to include any timetabled Zoom lessons.
- Our understanding is that Bedford Borough's school transport is continuing to run as usual for those students that are eligible.
- Students **must** wear full and correct school uniform, this **does not** include their PE kit.
- Mobile phones are to be used in line with our mobile phone policy or in the event that a student needs to access a Zoom lesson in this way. Our virtual learning platforms of epraise and itslearning are accessible via the desktops in the rooms' students have been allocated.
- Each year group continues to be in their own 'bubble' and each of the designated rooms has a seating plan. Students are expected to adhere to this seating plan every day to ensure social distancing measures can be maintained and we can accurately track and trace in the event of a positive case of COVID.
- Students **must** have their own stationery, a reading book and their own headphones with them every day.
- For Core PE optional fitness challenges and tasks will be provided.
- Although hand sanitiser and wipes are being provided in every room we would encourage students to bring their own hand sanitiser too.
- We would prefer the students to wear their mask at all times whilst in their designated room for lessons. The wearing of masks continues to be mandatory in corridors/internal social spaces.
- Students need to bring their own packed lunch and a drink (no fizzy or energy drinks are allowed). Students can refill their drinks bottles via the water fountain located in Piccadilly at break or lunchtime if required.
- Students who are eligible for free school meals will need to place their order for a packed lunch in the morning upon arriving at school and collect from the canteen at break time only.
- Break and lunchtimes will take place outside, weather permitting. Please ensure your child has plenty of layers to keep them warm and an appropriate coat.

Tel: 01234 290200 • Fax: 01234 290236 • email: mark.rutherford@mrus.co.uk • www.markrutherford.beds.sch.uk



Mark Rutherford School

Company Number. 08316719





Expectations – Remote Learning

A high percentage of our students are accessing their learning remotely from home. Attendance and behaviour have been good to date which is very pleasing. Thank you for the feedback we have received about the high quality of teaching and learning students are receiving given the quick move over to remote learning for all. We are also aware that there have been a few teething issues and we are working hard to resolve these, particularly in relation to having a clear understanding of what work needs to be completed or what students need to access via itslearning.

Please continue to monitor our website and the published Zoom timetable. There have been a couple of changes however, by Monday 11th January 2021 we are aiming to make no further tweaks.

If your child is accessing remote learning we have the following expectations:

- Students are to access all timetabled Zoom lessons. The link to each lesson will be available on the relevant itslearning course page and communicated via epraise.
- Students are to stay for the duration of the lesson and engage fully.
- Attendance is being accurately monitored and teachers will make contact with you if your child has not attended a lesson. It is therefore important that the student accurately identifies themselves using their correct name.
- Students must communicate appropriately, for example, via the chat facility on Zoom.
- Students **are not** to share the Zoom link for any lesson with anyone else, to include students from our school under any circumstances.
- We are keen to praise students for their engagement and hard work however, will also demerit students who do not behave appropriately whilst in a Zoom lesson.
- For Core PE optional fitness challenges and tasks will be provided.
- Lessons will run in line with our current timings of the school day as follows:

Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays

Lesson	Timings
Tutor	8.30 – 8.45
1	8.45 – 9.45
2	9.45 – 10.45
Break	10.45 – 11.05
3	11.05 – 12.05
4	12.05 – 13.05
Lunch	13.05 – 13.35
5	13.35 – 14.35

Tuesdays

Lesson	Timings
Tutor	8.30 – 8.45
1	8.45 – 9.35
2	9.35 – 10.25
PSHE	10.25 – 11.05
Break	11.05 – 11.25
3	11.25 – 12.15
4	12.15 – 13.05
Lunch	13.05 – 13.35
5	13.35 – 14.35

In the event that you need to reset a password please email the relevant address as given below:

- Its Learning - ItsLearningPwdRst@mrus.co.uk
- Epraise - ePraisePwdRst@mrus.co.uk
- GCSEPod - GCSEPodPwdRst@mrus.co.uk
- Educake - EducakePwdRst@mrus.co.uk

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Headteacher: Mrs Julie Bloor
BA (Hons), PGCE, NPOH

Mark Rutherford School
Wentworth Drive
Bedford MK41 8PX



MARK RUTHERFORD SCHOOL

Mock Exams

In light of the current tighter lockdown and the changes to this summer's exams our timetabled mocks exams are currently postponed. Once we have an updated timeline of events in relation to students returning to school and an understanding of how students' grades will be awarded this summer we will update you as to our plans as soon as we can.

Summer Exams

We are expecting a government announcement today about how students in Years 11, 12 or 13 will be awarded examination grades. We understand that this is a challenging and uncertain time for students who have worked so hard not only in the first lockdown last year but since our return to school in September. Teachers had also ensured their curriculum plans had been adapted to support students in being as fully prepared as possible for the final summer exams.

In the meantime it is really important that all students expecting to sit summer exams remain positive and engaged with their remote learning. We currently do not know how grades are going to be awarded and although exams may not go ahead as expected students will still need to be assessed by their teachers. Therefore attendance to every Zoom lesson and completing all of the work set is going to support them and us in ensuring they get the right final grade. Despite so many unknowns what we do know is that hard work, effort, dedication and commitment pays off and contributes to the best possible chances of success.

BTEC Exams

Following Monday's government announcement it was clear that the January BTEC exams in Years 11, 12 and 13 were expected to go ahead. Just last night the DfE made an announcement that we could decide whether it was appropriate for our students to do these. We are currently consulting with the relevant teachers, subject leaders and Heads of Department in relation to our decision. Again, we will update you as to our plans as soon as we can.

Tutor Time

From Monday 11th January 2021 there will be a weekly tutor time with your child's tutor – this will take place from 8.30 – 8.45am each week. Your child's tutor will communicate via epraise and ensure there is a Zoom link on itslearning via their tutor group course page.

Assemblies – Years 11 and 13

Given that there is such a change to the exams system again this summer we would like to hold an assembly with Years 11 and 13 as follows:

- Year 11 – Friday 8th January 2021 at 8.30am.
- Year 13 – Wednesday 13th January 2021 at 8.30am.

Zoom links will be sent via the relevant year group course pages on itslearning.

Devices

We have been well supported by the DfE as well as other local charities and organisations in relation to the provision of devices to support students with their home learning. If you need some support with access to a laptop or data then please contact schoolclosures@mrus.co.uk and we will do our best to help.

Free School Meals

We have a statutory requirement to continue to provide students with a meal option if they are currently eligible for a free school meal. If your child is in school then they will need to place their order for a packed lunch in the morning upon arriving at school and collect from the canteen at break time only.

If your child is currently accessing remote learning then we will prepare a food parcel that will be distributed to you at home each Monday by a member of staff – we will aim to deliver before midday. Social distancing will be adhered to all times.

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 [mark_rutherford](https://twitter.com/mark_rutherford)

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Headteacher: Mrs Julie Bloor
BA (Hons), PGCE, NPQH

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Parents Evenings and OCC4U

We currently have the following events calendared:

- Year 9 Parents Evening – Thursday 28th January 2021
- OCC4U (to support students in Years 9, 11, 12 and 13) – Thursday 4th February 2021
- Year 11 Parents Evening – Thursday 25th February 2021

We intend to hold all events virtually as planned. Further information will be communicated with the relevant year groups in the near future.

Social Media

We will endeavour to ensure our social media platforms of Facebook (@MarkRutherfordMK41) and Twitter (@Mark_Rutherford) regularly updated. In addition, we will send out detailed letters and communication as and when we need to. We are keen that social media is used appropriately and therefore kindly ask that any concerns or questions are raised via direct contact with the school by telephone (01234 290200) or by emailing schoolclosures@mrus.co.uk. We will then endeavour to be contact with you direct as soon as possible.

Thank you again for your continued support and understanding. Please stay safe.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Headteacher

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