



November 2020

Dear parent/carer

One of the challenges of the current COVID-19 pandemic situation has been facilitating students accessing learning when they are forced to stay at home, whether this is because of a full lockdown (as occurred earlier in the year), their class 'bubble' having to isolate or individual periods of isolation. We are very much focused here at HHS on getting quickly to a point at which all students having to learn at home have access to high quality learning via online platforms. This would mean, for example, that students could be a part of their lessons remotely via Microsoft Teams video meetings or access their work on the VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) or other online platforms like MathsWatch or GCSE Pod.

This is only possible if all students have a suitable device at home (ideally a laptop) with internet access. We are exploring as many avenues as we can to provide devices to those without one when they are needed for home learning (indeed, they are incredibly useful as a learning tool even when not learning from home) and we will continue to do so, but it is impossible to source devices for everyone. This means that, in the event of any future school closure related to COVID, we cannot provide laptops for all children that currently do not have one.

To that end, I am writing to you with the recommendation that, if it is financially possible and your child does not have access to one, you aim to purchase a laptop in the near future (with Christmas coming up this could be a gift idea, perhaps?). It is possible to source a refurbished ChromeBook, for example, for around £150, or a new laptop for around £280. I fully understand that not all families will be in a position to do this, and we will always look to provide as much support as we can for those unable to do so, but if you are able, this would be extremely helpful for your child not only in the current situation, but for their learning in general. In addition, internet access is vital for effective remote learning, so it would be important to ensure your child can gain internet access via Broadband/similar at home if this was to be a successful learning tool.

If you already have a laptop/device for your child to use at home, or if you do purchase one soon, please always be mindful of E-Safety and setting up effective parental controls at home to ensure your child is not unsafe or able to access unsuitable material via the internet. There is useful guidance for parents/carers on this here:

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>.

Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions on this matter.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L Greenwood
Deputy Headteacher

