Date: 19th March 2020

Dear Parents,

**Continuous Learning in the Secondary School**

As we move into campus closure and a period of continuous remote learning, it is important to share our aims during this unusual time. In the Secondary School, we want to:

- Provide **excellent learning experiences** as **appropriate** to our varying age groups and student needs- allowing younger students to access some of their learning at times suitable for the whole family, whilst ensuring our older students are following a rigorous and robust timetable in preparation for examinations;
- Focus on **wellbeing** daily - this is going to be a challenging time for us all, and we want to make sure that our students are coping well;
- Provide **regular feedback and communication** - though we are not able to meet in person, we want to maintain as much communication with students as we can;
- Validate learning - just as we do in class, we want to **celebrate successes**, provide feedback and share the hard work everyone has been doing.

**Continuous Learning Provision Outline**

Speaking to schools who have been in Continuous Learning situations for some time, it has very quickly become clear that we cannot expect our younger students to be completing the same ‘amount’ of work at home as they are doing at school - demanding too much would be unsustainable.

However, it is also important in a secondary school context, that students are able to continue with their wide range of subjects so they don’t feel like they are missing out on their favourite lessons!

For our older students, especially those approaching public examinations, it is important that we maintain a robust programme of learning to ensure they are adequately prepared to perform to the very best of their ability.
For these reasons, we have looked very carefully at what we will be expecting each week and have arrived at an increasingly demanding learning programme as we progress upwards through the year groups.

Years 7-8

Students will receive lessons in all subjects. They will be issued with a timetable on Friday that details when they are expected to be online for ‘live lessons’ which will make up approximately 5-6 hours of their learning provision, and when they should be working independently on tasks set by their subject teachers, which will account for another 6-8 hours of their learning provision for the week.

Years 9-10

Students will receive lessons in all their current subjects. They will be issued with a timetable on Friday that details when they are expected to be online for ‘live lessons’ which will make up approximately 6-8 hours of their learning provision, and when they should be working independently on tasks set by their subject teachers, which will account for another 8-10 hours of their learning provision for the week.

Internal Examinations

Internal examinations for Years 7-10 are currently scheduled for early in Term 4. Of course, in light of the circumstances, this will need to be reviewed and a later date scheduled if possible. We will certainly not be expecting students to complete examinations as soon as they return to school and we will ensure there is sufficient time planned for preparation.

Years 11-13

Students in Years 11-13 will be following their usual timetable as much as possible. For some small groups of students who need to finish practical elements of their course that cannot be completed at home, they will be able to come into school over the next few weeks. This is of course subject to any directives issued by the government and we will reassess this as necessary. If students are working here in school, we will be operating
under WHO social distancing guidelines to ensure we are keeping all members of our community safe.

Student learning will be delivered in a variety of formats depending on the subject and how much of the course students have left to complete. We will be using live streaming, group chats, videos, past examination papers and setting tasks for students to complete and receive feedback on.

The PE department will be sending out links to recommended online training programmes for the students to follow to ensure they are still managing adequate amounts of exercise, which is vital for their wellbeing.

**Public Examinations and Universities**

At the moment, we are continuing to prepare students to sit their GCSE, AS and A Level examinations as planned. Students are understandably anxious about the many ‘unknowns’ and uncertainties and we will keep students and parents informed with all the most up to date information published by the examination boards.

Currently, the guidance from CIE and Edexcel is unchanged from previous communication which can be found [here](#).

Our Higher Education Coordinator, Ms Hemelik is keeping students informed regarding any developments with university admissions. She will be available for online (and face-to-face if appropriate) meetings with students should there be any specific issues or concerns.

**Mentor Check In**

Students will have a conversation with their mentor at least once a week. This will enable us to check on student wellbeing and to give advice and suggestions to ensure students remain motivated and positive. Mentors will also use this time as an opportunity to ensure students are able to stay on top of their work and help them with any issues they may be having in accessing the various online platforms they will be using to stay connected.
Campus Drop In

If it is possible to ‘access’ the TBS Campus next week and during the period of ‘Campus Closure’ students will be able to return and have new books scanned out each day from 11:00-12:00am and 14:00-15:00. Please note there will be limits to the number of people allowed on site and you may be asked to wait outside until others have left and you will not be able to use other facilities during this time.

Students will also be able to visit the campus if they need ICT support that is not possible remotely. This can be done by appointment by emailing their mentor or the ICT support team on ict@tbs.edu.np

Reading

As we provide Continuous Learning to students, reading is an excellent way to challenge students academically as well as to improve their wellbeing. It is a simple activity to do independently and can help relieve stress and anxiety. Here is some advice for parents on how you can encourage reading at home, including reading lists and links to downloadable resources.

Online Platforms

We will be communicating with students using their Gmail accounts. All of our students are able to use the basics when it comes to sending and receiving emails, but some will need extra support to keep themselves organised. We have created this guide to using Gmail effectively and all students will be taken through this tomorrow by their mentors.

All of the learning tasks issued to students will be communicated via Google Classroom, which is linked to Gmail. All of our students are familiar with Google Classroom. Here is an online tutorial for using Google Classroom.

Teachers will be using Quicktime to make videos that will be shared with students via Google Classroom. If students need to access a Quicktime video, they simply need to click on the link they have been sent and the video will play automatically. The Gmail guide linked above was recorded using Quicktime if you would like to see an example.
To maintain connection with students, we will also be using Google Meet, which allows for conversations between teachers and their class or between groups of students if they have been set a collaborative task. If students will be using their Ipads to access Google Meet, it is recommended that they download the app. Teachers will be helping students to do this but instructions for how to download this app can be found here.

Youtube is another platform that some teachers may use to live stream lessons to students. During live streaming, students over 13 years of age are able to use the ‘live chat’ feature which enables them to ask questions during the broadcast. Like Quicktime, students simply need to follow the link they have been sent at the time the live stream is scheduled for. For those of you who are interested in how live streaming works, this video has been created by our teachers to explain how the process works.

All live online content will be recorded so that students can watch at a later time if they want to review and revise or if they are unable to be online at the specified time.

Student Wellbeing

Our school counsellor, Ms Groom, has put together a guide for students and parents to give advice on how to ensure our students stay positive and healthy during what is an unpredictable time. This guide can be found here.

In order to stay motivated and healthy, we are advising students to complete at least one wellbeing activity a day. Suggestions for wellbeing activities can be found here.

With our older students, we know they are very aware of global events and the potential impact of the spread of the Covid-19 virus. We believe it is important to be transparent with our secondary students to help them understand our decision making and also to help them navigate the huge amount of information and misinformation available to them. Please find here the information that has been shared with our students so far regarding the virus and here the information that was shared to explain our decision to close the campus.
Code of Conduct

As we transition to an online platform for education and learning, it is important for students to remember how we respect and respond to others as caring and supportive individuals. Although we may not physically be on campus, we expect all students to continue pursuing excellence within their learning and demonstrating kindness towards one another. All online activities will be conducted in a safe and respectful manner so that learning and wellbeing can continue being supported. We believe that Challenge, Confidence, Creativity, Community and Compassion will be achieved and maintained if we all follow the guidance which can be found here.

Thank you for your continued support as we prepare for campus closure. We will be reviewing our provision regularly and asking for your feedback so please do stay in touch! We are incredibly proud of how our students have responded to the challenges so far and we are confident that they are ready to adapt to this new way of learning. This is, of course, an ever changing and fluid situation and as things develop we may need to change our structure and approach. We will continue to keep you informed.

If you have any questions about our overall continuous learning provision, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Pauline Gradden

Head of Secondary, Vice Principal
FAQs

Below we have collated some of the questions our students have been asking over the past few days.

What if I can’t get online at the time of a live stream?

*If you can’t get online, don’t panic! Aim to contact your teacher as soon as you are able to let them know that you were having problems. All live lessons will be recorded so that you can catch up at a later time.*

What do I do if I don’t understand the work that has been set?

*Just as you would in a classroom, read carefully through all of the instructions to make sure you haven’t missed anything, ask your classmates if they have understood and then if you’re still not sure, email your teacher and ask them to explain it in a different way.*

Can I meet up with other students to work?

*This would be subject to the latest advice about social distancing. At the moment, as we have not been impacted locally by the virus, it is possible for small groups to meet, so you would be able to work with 1 or 2 friends to complete your work. If this advice changes though, it is important that you are responsible and follow the most up to date guidelines.*

How will teachers know if I am completing my work?

*During ‘live’ lessons, teachers will be asking you to let them know that you are present by responding to the group messaging or interacting on Google Classroom. They will be keeping records of contact they have had with you and work that has been submitted so that we can see if your attendance is low or if you have not been meeting deadlines. In this case, we would contact you and your parents to find out if there are any problems and see what we can do to help.*
What if we stop being allowed to come into school to complete our GCSE or A Level practical work?

We will do our very best to support you in completing your practical work remotely. Where this is not possible, we will apply to the exam board for special consideration, though at the moment it is unlikely that this would be successful. If necessary, you will be able to complete your examinations and coursework components in the next available examination series.