



Widford Lodge

WIDFORD LODGE SCHOOL LTD, WIDFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD, ESSEX CM2 9AN

17th April 2020

Dear Parents,

Microsoft Teams for Prep School

I do hope you are all well. This email is specifically about our use of Microsoft Teams for remote learning: I will send a more general back to school update next week. As I mentioned before the "break", we have been working hard to implement Microsoft Teams for remote learning and for online meetings (which are like zoom calls but more secure).

I have outlined below details about logging in and what pupils will see, as well as some information about how they will view, hand in and receive feedback on work. Using Teams, the assignment hand in function means that the feedback/scores are part of a dialogue between the individual child and the teacher, so can't be seen by others.

I have also attached a timetable which shows, for each class, the online lesson meetings scheduled for each day. Each class has at least three maths and three English meetings per week scheduled in the mornings and at least one other subject meeting per day scheduled in the afternoons. These will give teachers the chance to explain tasks and methods via the video link and where necessary for pupils to ask any questions. The timetable also shows the other lessons for which work will be set on Teams each day: this is almost exactly the same as the pupils' existing timetables but there were a few minor changes needed to fit around the meetings.

If a pupil can't attend a scheduled meeting, the teacher will post the recording for them to access later that day, but the recording will be removed at the end of each working day to make room for the next day's recordings.

As previously, we suggest that all maths and English work is completed and submitted on the day set and that the other subjects are voluntary but advised. Teachers will continue to inform either me or Mrs Pawsey if they don't hear from a pupil for a couple of days, so that we can check that everything is OK.

I am so grateful to all of the staff for working incredibly hard over the last two weeks to get this up and running and to become familiar with the functionality of Teams. Of course, there will be teething problems, so please do bear with us, but please let your child's form teacher and me know of any concerns or issues that you have. Our hope please is that you will ask your children to try logging on over the weekend and checking that they have the correct Teams shown. They could, with you, check

that the cameras and microphones are enabled and they could go onto their Registration team and watch some of the user guide videos recorded and uploaded by Mr Callaway.

On Tuesday, our inset day, staff will continue with their familiarisation of Teams. On Wednesday morning, form teachers will communicate with pupils via the Registration Team and there will be maths and English familiarisation meetings and exercises, to check that all pupils can receive and return work. There won't be any afternoon meetings on Wednesday but work will be set for those lessons on the timetable for that day. The full timetable for work and meetings will begin on Thursday. From Thursday onwards by 8.30am form teachers will load onto the relevant Registration team the subjects that each form should have work for that day, along with the online meetings scheduled. Pupils will then go to each of their subject teams to find the work and complete it.

In putting together this timetable, we have been mindful of the need to balance screen time, parental involvement and other constraints on remote learning such as multiple users sharing devices. Of course, please continue to liaise with form teachers about any particular issues arising in your household. It may be that we need to alter the timetable when it has been running for a few days as issues arise, in which case I will of course communicate this to you.

There are some rules/etiquette to be followed during video meetings and when using Teams please, if you could run through these with your child:

- Pupils should not be in their bedrooms when in a meeting with a teacher
- Pupils should be dressed and not in their pyjamas when in a meeting with a teacher
- Pupils should not record the video meetings
- Pupils should not use the Teams messaging function to have conversations with each other, only with teachers.

Finally, some details about how pupils should log in and use Teams.

There are 2 versions of Teams, a Desktop version and a Mobile version (found on Google Play and iTunes store). The Desktop version is ideally the platform that pupils should use as it has a few additional features that the mobile app does not. The Desktop version will enable pupils to complete Assignments set by teachers directly onto the answer document the teacher may provide, the mobile version does not always enable this. However, the mobile app gives more flexibility as it allows access from various devices i.e. phones/ipad/tablet etc. so the mobile version is easier to use for general queries and meetings. You can download either version easily: you can use this link to download the Teams App to your device [here](#)

Pupils should log in using their usernames which follow this format: Forename.Surname@widfordlodge.co.uk

Their passwords are from their [Code.Org](#) secret words, which they already know and have in their planners, **capitalised** and **separated with a 'dot'** (no spaces); e.g. the secret words: blue banana = Teams password: Blue.Banana

After logging in, pupils will see a main page with a set of icons along the left side (or along the bottom on the mobile app). The icons read as:
Activity/Chat/Teams/Assignments/Calendar/Calls/Files.

Clicking on the Teams tab will bring up all of the Teams for that pupil. They will have a Registration Team, this is the one they should click on each morning for messages from their form teacher and to see the subjects for which work and meetings are scheduled for each day. Each pupil will have a Team for each subject, so a pupil in 3C would have 3C Registration Team, 3C English Team, 3C maths team etc. To see posts and assignments for each subject, they click on the relevant Team icon. Pupils should only post messages to the whole team when they are essential.

The Assignments tab is where pupils will find their work, with instructions and attachments as necessary and sometimes with a deadline date. Work may be set in a number of formats such as PDF, Audio & Video clips, web links, photo clips or within Microsoft Word, Excel PowerPoint etc. One of the benefits of Teams is that pupils do not need to have Microsoft Office software or accounts to complete work set in Word, Excel or PowerPoint format. Having Teams automatically comes with these Office products embedded, as it is based on Office 365. So even if a child is on a Macbook etc, when they open the file, they will still be able to complete this on the Office software provided or using software of their choice. For example a teacher may set work and provide an answer sheet in Word, the pupil then clicks on the attachment (regardless of the machine used) and it will open. They then select "Edit" and can complete the document within the Microsoft Word format, as it was originally dispatched. Teams also automatically saves the document whilst the child is still completing it –meaning that the teacher can access the completed work directly through Teams.

I realise that I have included a lot of information in this document and that some of you will be feeling very apprehensive. Provided that your child can log on and find their Registration Team, teachers will be able to guide them from here and that is what we have set Wednesday morning aside for. If they can't log on, please can you contact their form teacher on Monday or Tuesday: we are still at school with keyworker children on a rota basis every day and from Wednesday will also be very busy with the new timetable so please don't leave it until Wednesday to try logging on for the first time.

Thank you in advance for your patience and support. Teachers have all been sent some guidance and expectations regarding work and feedback following our first nine days of remote learning, so thank you for your positive comments and suggestions that have contributed to this.

Miss Cole
Headteacher