



Lockdown

January 2021

Student Handbook



ELLESMERE PORT CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full' John 10.10

Introduction

You have been given this handbook because we have entered a period of lockdown and you are required to engage with your learning remotely from home. It can feel very strange to be away from school. You might find yourself feeling more anxious, or worried that you are missing out on learning. You might feel lonely or left out because you cannot physically socialise with friends. On the other hand, some of you might be comfortable and enjoy learning remotely, particularly after all the practice you had during the previous lockdown.

Whatever you are feeling about the situation, it is certainly not your fault and it is not within your control to change things so please try to stop worrying. You are doing the right thing in staying at home and we will support you fully. Try to see it as an opportunity to develop your independent study skills and aim to enjoy the challenge.

We want you to know that we are here for you, whether you need help with learning, additional support from teachers, or someone to talk to about worries or concerns. This handbook has been given to you so you have a clear idea of what you can expect from us, and who you can get in touch with when you want to talk. Even though you are not in the building, you are still one of us, and we want you to feel a part of our community, even if you cannot physically be with us day-to-day.

Accessing work

Teachers will set schoolwork on Microsoft teams.

The lessons have been planned and resourced by subject specialists and aim, *as far as possible*, to follow the curriculum you would normally follow in school, lesson by lesson. They might not be identical, but content will be broadly similar. You can access the work via Microsoft Teams.

For support accessing Microsoft teams contact helpdesk@epchs.co.uk.

Video tutorials on how to set up, download and use Microsoft Teams can be found by clicking on the links below:

Student Guide - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aO9LE6ZKnUM>

Parent Access Guide - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFT8h7UpCsY>

Why do we have to do the Learning from Home if I am only going to be away from school for a few weeks?

We want you to be in the best position for your learning when you return to us. We do not want you to feel behind and we want your learning to be at the same stage as other pupils in your class. We also believe that being stretched and challenged is good for your mental health. We also must be prepared in the event that the lockdown period is extended beyond the current date set out by the Government.

Do I follow my usual timetable?

The best approach is to follow the timetable you would have in school. It is much easier to keep on top of work and stay focused if a routine is established from Day 1. You should:

- Get up by 8.00am, get washed and dressed and eat breakfast in readiness for a school day.
- Find a space where you can access a computer or other device and engage with each task over the day.
- Negotiate use of your family computer if you are having to share. You may only need the computer briefly if there are any learning activities you can do without using the computer.

Will form time and assemblies take place?

Form time will be on everyday from 8:45 am to 9:00 am.

Form time schedule

Mindful Monday/Theme of the Week
Thoughtful Tuesday/Top-up Tuesday Numeracy
Wellbeing Wednesday/Wonder Wednesday
Thoughtful/Top-up Numeracy Thursday
Francis Friday/Fun Friday

Assemblies will take place every Monday and your Pastoral Leader will notify you in the whole year group folder in Teams.

Do I have to complete my lessons in order?

Where possible, it is best to follow your school timetable. Some of your lessons will be carried out live on zoom and your teachers will notify you of this. Please note that currently teachers are prioritising live lessons with Year 11 and 13. If your class teacher organises a live lesson, they will send an invitation within the class in Teams. You must make every effort to attend the lesson on time just as you would if you were at school.

What if I am stuck?

If you get stuck and cannot find an answer or if you do not understand the task, email your teacher, and ask for additional guidance. However, it may take them a few days to respond. In the meantime, try searching online for support or start a new task and come back to the work when you have had a response.

Either move on to the next task or do some silent self-quizzing on that subject using knowledge organisers for that subject or even a little extra internet-based research. You will not be in trouble, we promise. Obviously, practical subjects might be a little trickier. Those teachers should have set you something you can do at home but if there is a problem because you do not have access to whatever materials you need, focus on your other subjects.

How should I organise my work?

If you are working on paper or sheets you have printed out...

- Add a date and subject to each piece of work.
- Keep the work you have completed organised in separate folders or wallets for each subject so you can access them easily.
- Put your work in date order.

If you are working on a PC/laptop...

- Make a folder for each subject and give it a name, English, Maths etc.
- Name each piece of work sensibly e.g., 'DT/Beat the flood lesson 2' NOT.....'flooding again' or 'Untitled 1' - this will make it hard to find later if you need to refer to it.
- Put a date on each piece of work so you know when you completed it.

How do I avoid distractions?

- Make sure the TV is off, your mobile phone away and that any social media or other distractions are also removed.
- Try to find a quiet space, this will help you concentrate and enjoy your learning more.
- It may be helpful for you to set a timer for short periods of time (15 – 20 minutes) during which you try to focus 100%, followed by a 5-minute break.

Do I need to email or send in work to my teacher?

You do not have to submit work for assessment unless specifically instructed to do so in the lesson notes. However, if you have worked hard on a task and would like your teachers to see how you have done, they will be very pleased to have work emailed to them or uploaded to the class in Teams. They may respond with brief feedback and / or praise. If you have questions you want to ask your teacher about the work, you should email the relevant teacher. Teachers will check all requested work submitted within a fortnight period and provide written or verbal feedback on at least one piece a fortnight. If you have not received any response within a couple of days of submitting work, send them a reminder (teachers are busier than usual).

What if my teacher is setting too much work for me to complete in the hour?

It is very difficult for teachers to judge how long it will take you to complete tasks because obviously this will vary from student to student. For those of you feeling a little overwhelmed by the amount of work, please just do as much as you can in the time you would normally have for lessons and do not worry if you cannot get it all done. Try to put yourself in charge of your own learning at this time. Look at the work that has been set for the following hour and decide if it would be more helpful to continue with the earlier piece of work rather than start the new session.

What if I finish before the end of the hour?

If you are getting through the work too quickly, you may need to go back and add more detail to that session's work or an earlier task. You could watch a related documentary on YouTube or pick an aspect of your studies that

interests you and carry out further research into it. Perhaps you could use the time for some valuable Knowledge Organiser revision, remembering that just reading the material is not very beneficial; try testing yourself with Flash Cards, using Look, Cover, Write, Check, creating mind-maps, etc. Alternatively, consider any of the following:

- Attempt any extra challenges set by the teacher.
- Visit www.samlearning.com to access thousands of activities across all subjects through KS3, KS4 and KS5. Complete tasks for rewards and challenge other students. (Please note you will have access to this in January and will receive details of how to access the website very shortly)
- Keep up with your reading and learning online with myON by logging onto <https://www.myon.co.uk/login/> and entering school name, username and password. You can email our librarian, Mrs, McHugh (dem@epchs.co.uk) for more information on this.
- visit www.thesaurus.com or www.dictionary.com to widen your vocabulary.
- Explore the Books Trust website <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/> and in particular, look at their section on writing tips for teens: <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/writing-tips/writing-tips-for-teens/>
- access a vast number of short stories aimed at high school students at <https://owlcation.com/academia/Very-Short-Stories-For-High-School>
- Visit www.hegartymaths.co.uk to complete extra maths and build your numeracy skills.

What if I am not able to complete the learning activities?

If there is a reason that you cannot complete the learning activities for example, your computer had stopped working, do not panic. You can telephone school to let your Pastoral Leader know. Work through the revision guides you have been provided with and complete tasks and questions. You could also look back through your exercise book to see if there is any work you could improve. Try reading a book or watching a documentary on television. We want you to be as safe and as happy as possible so keep calm. At this difficult time, things may happen that interrupt your learning. We understand this and will make sure everybody has opportunities to catch up when the time comes for us to return to school.

What if I am unwell?

We do not expect anyone to work if they are poorly so anyone who is feeling unwell must rest and get well again. Do not worry about schoolwork.

Note to parents / carers: do I need to supervise?

This is absolutely your choice and it will very much depend on your own circumstances. While many may students work harder if an adult is watching over them, it is important that they learn to be self-disciplined enough to work independently. If you child has additional needs and you are concerned about how they will cope with remote learning, please get in touch our SENCO, Mrs. Marsland (VMA@email.epchs.co.uk) who will be able to advise.

Who else can I speak to if I need help?

For technical help, please email the helpdesk (helpdesk@epchs.co.uk)

For subject specific help, please email your class teacher (their email addresses can be accessed here: <https://epchs.co.uk/contact-2020/teaching-staff/>)

For safeguarding or student wellbeing, please contact:

Mrs. J Jones (JJJ@email.epchs.co.uk)

Mrs. C Hughes (CHU@email.epchs.co.uk)

A member of the Safeguarding team will be in school each day and both Mrs Jones and Mrs Hughes are available via Microsoft teams for students.

Mrs Jones has published a mobile phone number on the website for emergencies for Parents and Professionals.

External safeguarding agency meetings will proceed as normal via virtual meetings.

For any pastoral matters contact your Pastoral Leader, See below:

	Pastoral Leader
Y7	Suzanne.Wright@epchs.co.uk
Y8	Dillon.Walker@epchs.co.uk
Y9	Callum.Crutchley@epchs.co.uk
Y10	Rebecca.Bailey@epchs.co.uk
Y11	Martin.Parrin@epchs.co.uk
Y12/13	L.Cavanagh@epchs.co.uk - Pastoral L.Henderson@epchs.co.uk - Academic

Both Farhan Patel and Charlotte Davies our Learning Mentors are available via Microsoft Teams for the students to contact. They will be continuing to have 1:1 sessions and some small group sessions via Microsoft Teams and Zoom.

The school counsellor will conduct her counselling sessions online via Zoom and these are triaged and managed by Farhan Patel: SEMH Intervention Co-ordinator.

Managing my mental health during lockdown or self-isolation/shielding

If you are self-isolating or shielding, you might find yourself feeling lonely, anxious, or left out. There are some things that you can do to try to help yourself:

Stay Connected

If you cannot meet up with people you would like to see in person, make plans to video chat instead. If you are feeling anxious about coronavirus or spending a lot of time at home, you may find it helpful to talk about these worries with someone you trust. There are members of staff in school who are there to support you, even if you are not physically in school. Get in touch your Pastoral Leader or Form Teacher and they will be able to help you.

If you are going online more than usual, it is important to look after your online wellbeing. Set time limits on your phone or device and stick to them! Too much screen time can give you headaches and stop you enjoying good quality sleep. The Mental Health Charity 'Mind' provides this mental health checklist.

Connectivity: have you got ways to keep in contact with people in your life? Do you need help with using digital communication, like video calls?

Routine: can you create a routine or timetable for yourself? If you live with other people, should you create a household schedule?

Food: do you have a way to get food delivered if you need to self-isolate?

Cleaning: do you have enough cleaning supplies including sanitisers?

Medication: do you have enough medication, or a way to get more?

Therapy: Can you re-organise any therapy or counselling to phone or online sessions?

Exercise: is there any physical activity you can do inside your home, like going up and down the stairs, using bean tins as weights, or exercises you can do in your chair?

Nature: have you thought about how you can bring nature into your home? Can you get some seeds and planting equipment delivered, or put up photos of green spaces? Can you sit in your garden?

Entertainment: have you thought about things to do, books to read or TV shows to watch?

Relaxation: have you got materials so you can do something creative, such as pencils and paper or other craft materials?

Remember, this is only temporary. However strange things feel right now, it will not last for forever.