

DPA Covid-19 Newsletter 1

Support for families

We understand that this is a unique and rather challenging situation in which we currently find ourselves, and we are having to adjust to our new circumstances and find our 'new normal'. To help DPA families adjust to this, we will be sending you a weekly newsletter with advice and guidance on everything from teaching and learning tips and resources, to useful wellbeing support and essential practical information. We hope you will find this useful, and welcome your feedback and any positive stories about how our fantastic DPA community are adjusting and maintaining learning – please share your successes and achievements at office@dittonparkacademy.co.uk

Staying safe online

With so many of our students now relying on online learning platforms, please find below a link to National Online Safety <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/guides>. This website offers a wealth of information from 'How to maintain good mental wellbeing during isolation' to 'Top 10 tips: remote learning for parents' and 'How to clean devices guide'.

Home learning

As you will know, we have been setting work on Teams for students to complete:

- Key Stage 3 students have projects from each subject based on the theme of *Pioneers*. Students are also encouraged to continue working on their usual subjects by reviewing and testing their prior learning (from their exercise and texts books). Thinking maps are a great method for checking learning and a number of useful study strategies have been uploaded onto Teams to help students know how to review and consolidate their prior learning.
- Key Stages 4 and 5 are being set work from their teachers on a weekly, or in some cases lesson by lesson, basis, again via Teams. There is an expectation that this work is completed and submitted (by uploading onto Teams) in the usual timely fashion and to the usual highest standards we have come to expect from our students.

We understand and support your desire to establish a routine which is why we have asked our teachers to set regular work (and in some cases actually carry out lessons) online via Teams. However, whilst we continue to have high aspirations and expectations of our students, we are also realistic and we appreciate that this will take time and will need to be flexible according to each family's context. We do not want to add to pressures families may already be feeling; therefore, please be kind to yourselves and allow 'down time' and important social, family and recreation time, even if it doesn't always fit in with the schedule you have created. With this in mind, below is an example schedule you may find useful – aim for approximately 5 hours of learning time (similar to school), with 30-60 minutes exercise and fresh air, and 1-2 hours homework (again, similar to school).

- 8.30-9.00am (30 mins) *Breakfast*
- 9.00-9.30am (30 mins) *Exercise (Joe Wicks PE lesson on YouTube)*
- 9.30-9.45am (15 mins) *Break*
- 9.45-12.15pm (2 hrs 30 mins) *Learning via Teams and independent work (with a few short 5 minute breaks)*
- 12.15-1.15pm (1 hr) *Lunch*
- 1.15-3.45pm (2 hrs 30 mins) *Learning via Teams and independent work (with a few short 5 minute breaks)*
- 3.45-4.15pm (30 mins) *Break*
- 4.15-5.15pm (1 hr) *Homework*

Please accept that any routine you establish will likely change as you evolve to your new circumstances and remember that playing games such as scrabble, chess and sudoku as a family will all count as lesson time, as will family discussions about how everyone is feeling and managing their emotions, and helping young people navigate the constant media coverage. (And helping with chores, gardening and cooking meals will certainly count as learning time!)

Remember to take regular screen breaks, even if much of the current learning is accessed online, and factor in regular 'get up and move' breaks, especially going outside in the fresh air where possible.

Work set should be submitted on time and if there are questions about the work set, teachers can be contacted via Teams or their DPA email addresses; please note that teachers are also managing their own family and working time similar to our DPA families, so please accept that they may not be able to respond immediately to queries.

Media

Whilst we will all be relying much more on our devices to maintain important and much needed contact with family and friends, please try to keep devices such as mobile phones in family areas, or time on them limited where possible, as the media coverage can be overwhelming as well as an all too accessible distraction from learning. You may also have already started to notice how the coverage of Covid 19 can be very different depending on the media outlet, with some much more rational and balanced and others preferring more sensational and scare mongering headlines – be conscious of the impact this can have on young minds.

Reflection time

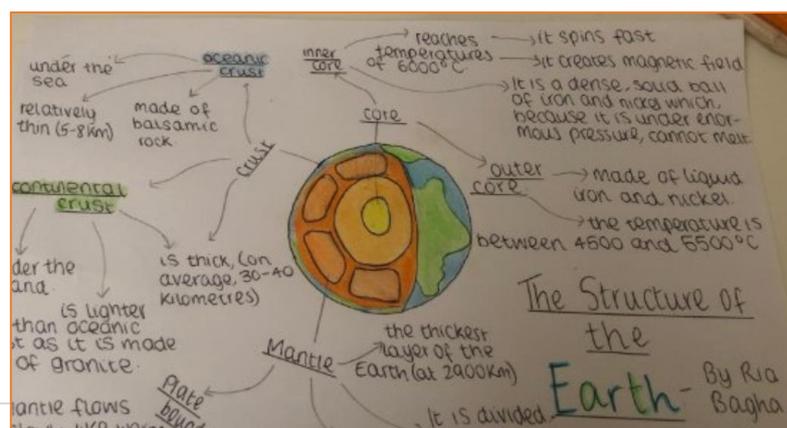
In trying to maintain a positive perspective during a challenging time, now might be a great opportunity to set a daily goal or write a daily reflection – take time to reflect. As a family, you will be able to look back on this in years to come and reflect on this unique experience.

Perhaps as a family you might endeavour to try something new that you've been putting off and talking about doing but never found the time: listening to podcasts; learning to play chess; growing your own vegetables; reading books. Find something that you can do together as well as activities that give you time by yourself.

The 'Strengthening Minds' organisation has put together a really useful booklet for families entitled '*The Strengthening Minds Guide to Staying Home in Style!*' – we have attached this for you. <https://www.strengtheningminds.co.uk/>

Stay in touch

Please do stay in touch via our Twitter feed @DPASlough and our school email office@dittonparkacademy.co.uk . Here are a few examples of some of the fantastic work our students have been completing from home – well done Lauren and Ria!



DITTON LINGUISTICS

BRINGING YOU DITTON PARK'S LINGUISTIC NEWS DAILY



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Are 'Global Englishes' simply knock-offs of the original language?

LAUREN MCLACHLAN
23RD MARCH 23, 2020

When you think of patriotism, England doesn't tend to come to mind. We are normally quiet, reserved and humble when it comes to things we care about, however, the opposite is true when it comes to our language. The English language is an offspring of almost every ancient language there has been. When West

from all over Europe so why are we offended when Global Englishes make an appearance? Are they not merely a reminder of our roots? Global Englishes include types of creole such as the Jamaican patois spoken by thousands of polyglots all over the world and others such as the so-called Spanglish. People who speak in a combination of languages are often looked down upon in our culture because of the unexplainable pride in our language. When foreign anglophiles write in their accent it becomes offensive as they are almost saying that our language isn't good enough for them to use. Are they putting their language on a pedestal or is ours simply too difficult to understand?

the terms and conditions for a new video game that has just been released, you are often given the choice between three different Englishes.

These are: British English, Irish English and American English. Are any of these languages incorrect? Are any of them correct for that matter? How do we distinguish between which languages are a knock off of another? If you were to talk to the average Brit, they would tell you that American English is laziness, or for the sake of time saving. So does this make it a cheating knock-off? Are we allowed to dismiss the English language development of another country simply because it is different to the country the

Next week

You may be feeling quite overwhelmed by the sheer volume of suggested resources being shared on social media; to help with this, next Friday we will be providing you with a list of resources personally selected and recommended by each subject to help you filter what is and is not useful.

Stay safe and stay home.

Ditton Park Academy