

Dear Parents and Carers,

Many thanks for the support that you are offering to your children at this time. As a parent myself, I appreciate how time consuming this can be, especially when online platforms such as Firefly and Hegarty are having issues across their network. Please bear with the new systems as they bed in, appreciate that this is a totally new way of working for teachers and colleagues as well, we are all learning quickly and doing our utmost to adapt our approach and respond to issues. **Please continue to email teachers, either parents or students can do this, and they will respond as quickly as possible to your question.**

In terms of Firefly, I earlier spoke with their customer care manager, he is now confident the issues of the last two days have been resolved. It does appear that the system is behaving well today, fingers crossed that this will continue.

We recognise that there are a number of questions coming through so thought that it would be helpful to address as these **Frequently Asked Questions**. I will respond to key questions currently being raised below, and we will add an FAQs document to the Covid 19 update pages on the school website. We will look to update this document regularly as new questions come in. If you have a question (or a suggestion), please email us on info@shoreham-academy.org with the title FAQ suggestion.

FAQs of the day

What happens if Firefly crashes and work is incomplete – do students leave and continue to the next lesson?

Do the best that you can to complete the work in the time available. If Firefly crashes, teachers are trying to send the work via email to your children. As a school, we know when there are issues with Firefly and understand if, during these times, work is incomplete.

What can my child do if they get no email and there is no work set that they can see?

They have a couple of options:

- They could revisit and complete/ extend tasks that they didn't manage to finish off in earlier sessions. They can then later message their teacher to explain what they have done. They can also, with a message, resubmit a piece of improved work for the teacher to review.
- If all work is up to date, they could read their personal reading book and update their reading log (Year 7-9) or (Year 10+) take an opportunity to revise prior learning or read beyond the subject.

What can my child do if they don't understand the task set?

First of all, don't get anxious. Try to work it out with the help of a parent or an older sibling. If you are still confused message the teacher. They will get back to you as soon as possible. If you cannot get on with the task for the time being, begin on the task for the next lesson and come back to the learning that confused you when the teacher has responded.

My child is feeling anxious because they are not getting through all of the work in the time available. Should they be working longer hours to complete everything?

We definitely do not want students to be feeling anxious or upset about not getting work finished. We would expect them to do the best in the time available to them – **everybody's best is different and their teachers know what they are capable of**. As previously said, if they have had issues with resources or connection they should let the teacher know so that they can understand your child's individual experience. Students only need to work the hours directed, for younger (KS3) students this should be no more than the regular school day with no weekend. Older students can expect additional work in line with the demands of their exam courses.

Me/ my child is still a bit confused by Firefly, how can I find out how to access work, send work to teachers, discover resources, email teachers?

No problem, we have prepared an online tutorial and a number of tip sheets. Please click [here](#) to access these on the website. There are further guides, walkthroughs and tip sheets on Firefly in the Learning+ guides section. [Click here](#)

We have one device at home and two children need it – what do you suggest?

We recognise that this is an issue for some families and have the following suggestions. Stagger the use of the device so that learning materials can be printed and worked on at the same time as the other child is online. If you have no printer, take a photograph on your phone so that you can check the details. If necessary, adapt your children's day so that their five hours of learning is fulfilled e.g. one could take an extended break in the middle of the day and return to complete classes in the late afternoon. We recognise the need for flexibility in such situations, let your teachers know that work might be submitted in the evening, later than scheduled.

I am struggling to access the work through the devices at home – can I come into school to complete?

In line with government announcements, school is only open for a very small number of students in exceptional circumstances. Their parents are key workers who need the school to help them so that they can help our families and our communities. School is therefore not open to students and visitors. We have to help resolve your access issues remotely. We have six colleagues who have been seconded to the IT support team in order to respond to your technical issues.

Should my child sit for the whole hour to do timetabled specific work?

We recognise that the work set might be easier for some students to complete in the time available than others. All learners are different, working at different speeds, with different areas of development. Teachers are working to structure tasks so that all students can access and complete tasks. They may include open ended tasks so that students can add more detail to their work. They may set core tasks and extend tasks, they may refer to them as bronze, silver and gold tasks to give students choice or the option to push on to another task. We do want students to focus for the hour but not beyond the hour, unless they are really keen to take it further, which is fine.

How do I access e ticket vouchers for FSM?

All students eligible for FSM have been emailed an e voucher for Tesco to use for the next two weeks, whilst we await further guidance from the government on the national voucher scheme. More information will follow as soon as we know any more. If you think that you are entitled to this provision but have not yet heard from us, please email Suzanne.butler@shoreham-academy.org

Should I continue to make payments for forthcoming trips? E.g. France, Blacklands?

Unless you are guided otherwise, please pause on payments for now. If you have any specific questions, please email the identified trip lead.

I really hope that these FAQs are helpful in providing you with clarifications on the most common uncertainties being experienced so far. Please email us with others and we will send out further answers in the coming days. **The real key is communication, please rest assured that no question is off limits and that we are doing our very best to respond.**

I wish you and your families all the best, hoping that you are staying fit and healthy.

Jim Coupe