

Sackville News



3rd April 2020

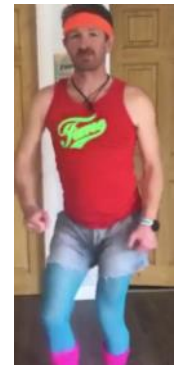
Dear Parents and Carers

I thought I would start this week's newsletter with some pictures of our students hard at work with their **remote learning**.



Here you can see **Adam Lindsay** in year 10 with the full conferencing set-up. Meanwhile **Ciaran Phillips** in year 9 is both doing his hospitality and catering remote learning and feeding his family. Three members of the **Day family** are hard at work at the kitchen table; only one (Mary in year 9) is currently at Sackville.

The last picture is of course our own **Mr Heatley**, doing what only a music teacher could call a **heavy rock workout** on a deserted weekend beach at Eastbourne; months of training on Photoshop has gone into his performance! This was Mr Heatley's slight tongue-in-cheek response to **Miss Offler's 'Sackville Can'** competition, which has excited many of our staff. Last weekend, **Mr Street** was moved to don 1980s gear in homage to **Mr Motivator**. Never has our Instagram account attracted so much comment! One former student posted 'He's an absolute legend and miss that guy so much GCSE geography was amazing would actually go back in time just for his lessons'.



One small upside of the school closure is that we have been able to share some of our science equipment with the Queen Victoria Hospital. Here you can see our Senior Science Technician Jackie Kool laden with goggles which could prove very useful over the coming weeks.

We have been busy **surveying parents** about their experiences of the first week of **remote learning**. Mr de Souza shares the findings later in this newsletter, and outlines how we are going to trim our practice in response. We will survey parents again some weeks into the new term.

We have also been giving some thought to how we **can keep in touch with our students through the school closure period**. As a start we are going to ask our tutors to check in with their tutees after Easter to see how they are coping with the demands of both the school work but also the difficult circumstances we are all facing.

This is the last Sackville News before Easter. Our thoughts are very much with our exam year groups. You may have heard that the **government has made an announcement today** concerning the award of grades. The **only change to what we sent out two weeks ago is that the grades are now more likely to be issued in August**, and no later than the original issue dates.

As usual at the end of term it is time to say our fond farewells to staff who are leaving us for new challenges. **Olivia Burton** served with distinction as our food technology technician since finishing her year 13 studies last year. Olivia has secured a place at **Kings College London** for the autumn to read social sciences. **Emma Rooke** started with us as a study supervisor in 2014, becoming our **careers leader** in 2016. Her calm advice and encyclopaedic knowledge have supported many a student make the transition from school, and it is not a surprise that she has been snapped up by Chichester College to lead their provision of the new T-level technical awards. **Jess Lloyd** started at Sackville ten years ago, and led the introduction of Spanish to the school, with staggering success. She is leaving us for a job at Falmer School, closer to home and her young family.

It just remains for me to wish you a **calm, peaceful and healthy Easter holiday** – everyone has earned a break, however different it might be this year.

Julian Grant

Headteacher

Remote learning

Mr de Souza writes:-

Thank you to the more than 300 households who responded to our remote learning survey. For anyone interested, there are a few summary words about what we found out at the end of this article.

Though there is a consensus that **we are setting about the right amount of work with about the right amount of challenge**, a recurring theme in the comments is that **it can still be overwhelming for the students**. Because of this, we are going to **slightly change how we approach things after the Easter Break**.

- We will aim to be setting **year 7-9** students about half-an-hour's work for each lesson. Thus we expect that students in these years would spend about 2 ½ hours each day doing school work
- We will be setting a little more than this for students in **year 10**, but would not expect them to be working the full five hours per day, unless they choose to explore extension activities
- Year 12s** will be set more than five hours' work each day, to cover both lessons and homework, as this next term is a critical one in their studies.
- Some subjects will set longer **project-based tasks**; others will continue to set work on a **lesson by lesson** basis. Both approaches had their supporters and detractors. Where project based tasks are used, **milestone checkpoints** will be built in to allow students to space their work.
- We will try to **set work for the date it is due to start**. Many teachers work late in the evenings and at weekends and students are understandably perturbed when getting a notification out of school hours.
- Teachers will continue to reply to email questions**. This was very well received according to the survey. The replies may not be immediate as many teachers also have young children of their own they are now caring for during the day. The replies will come though!
- We will be in contact with households where students seem to be struggling to engage** with the learning after the Easter break.

There are some **other points to make in response to the comments** made in the survey.

- We are aware we are setting materials in a number of **different file formats**. This reflects the repurposing of a fairly diverse ecosystem at school towards remote learning. All students have a **Google account** which is also used for login to **Show My Homework**. We have, we think, now set up with [Microsoft](#) the ability for students to sign up for their excellent **Office 365 suite** for free. The link will take you to a sign-up page. Students need to use the **sackvilleschool.org.uk domain** here (eg 18greeng@sackvilleschool.org.uk) and all should become clear from there. Thank-you to the parents who have pointed this out.
- We will continue to monitor and report on student engagement with remote learning using an **attitude to learning** grade. We will share these grades with parents via email as the summer term progresses.
- There will be **no work set for the Easter holiday**. Some assignments are due in the new term, and they will appear in the students' timelines over the holidays only because of their later due date.
- There is an [article here](#) on how to manage notifications of tasks being set in the SMHW app

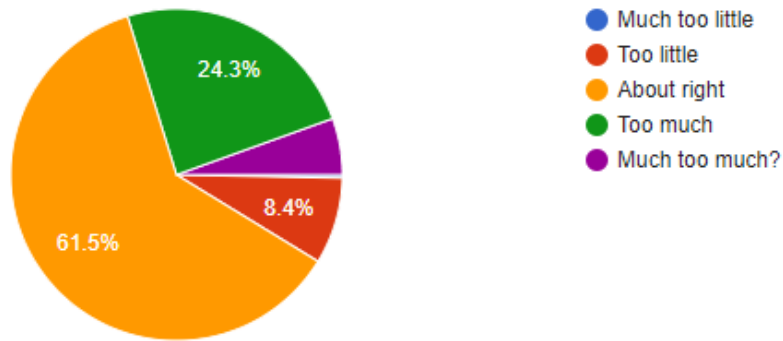
☐ We will survey parents again a few weeks into the summer term

Survey findings in brief

Over 300 families have taken the time to respond. Of these, about a quarter though the workload was too much; more than half thought it about right.

Overall, do you find the amount of work set

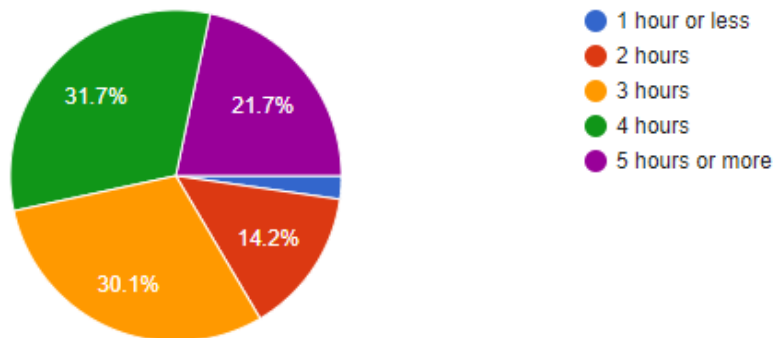
309 responses



About a fifth of students were working five or more hours per day. Most were working for three or four hours.

On average, how many hours per day is your child learning remotely?

309 responses

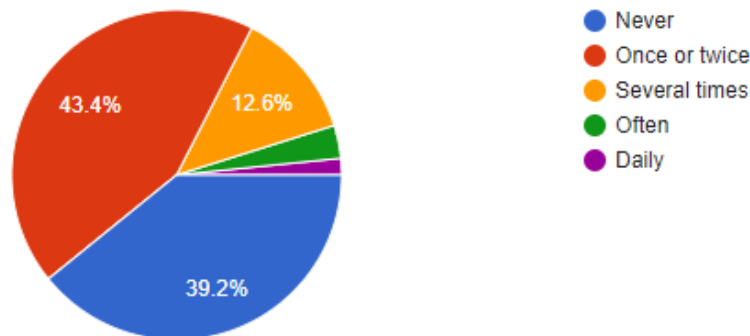


We also asked about **the amount and the challenge of the work for each subject**. For every subject, the most common response was 'about right'. Nonetheless, a theme through the comments was that though for each subject the workload was acceptable, in aggregate it was possibly too much, particularly where there is more than one learner in the household.

We also asked about the **use of email to contact staff**. Nearly two thirds of the sample had emailed a teacher, and almost everyone found this to be of some use, with about one-third saying it was very useful.

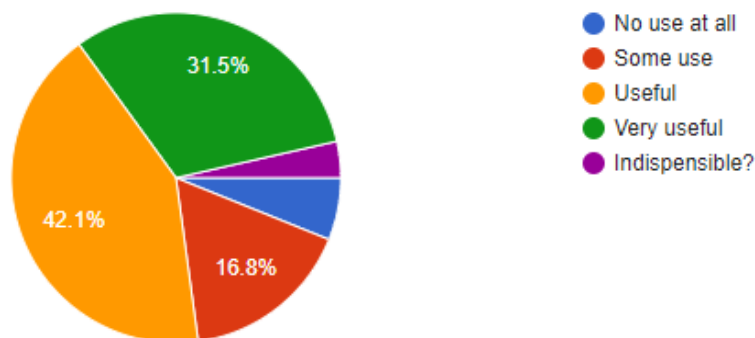
Have you had to contact any of the teachers by email?

309 responses



If you have had email contact with teachers, has it been

197 responses



There was a **veritable treasure trove of comments** alongside the numerical data. Often the comments were 'contradictory', which is to be expected as different students and households have different preferences. We hope the common themes have been addressed in the changes we are suggesting to our remote learning above.

We'll see how we look when we survey again in the summer term.

Thank-you very much for taking the time to reply to the survey.

Best wishes for a safe, peaceful and healthy Easter holiday.

Family time in the kitchen

Mrs Smeaton has an idea for making the Easter holiday cooking go by in a blur of familial harmony ...

Idea 1 - Ready, Steady, Cook

1. One member of the family selects five ingredients from the cupboard, fridge or freezer.
2. The designated “chef” can add other store-cupboard basics, such as spices, seasoning, flour ...
3. “Chef” produces the meal (younger members of the family can do this in teams)
4. If competitive, keep track of scores and the family member with the highest score (might take place over the course of the week) gets “treat” of their choice ... tea in bed, no household chores for a day, film choice ...

Idea 2 - “Come Dine with Me”

1. Over the week each member (or small teams) produce a three course meal, host a dinner party and select form of entertainment.
2. Keep track of secret scores to reveal at the end
3. Winning team gets their “treat” - see above



Please note that all in-school vaccinations that were scheduled between now and May 1st for students in years 8 and 9 have been cancelled.