

24th April 2020

Dear all,

In the interests of working efficiently and avoiding overwhelming you with multiple emails, I have endeavoured to collate information on the educational resources and professional learning available to you during lockdown to share via this regular update. If you notice anything that you think should be included in future roundups, please let me know via Teams or email.

ADVANTAGE SCHOOLS TRUST REMOTE TEACHING HANDBOOK

Your school principal will already have shared the Remote Teaching Handbook with you. As mentioned, this is a working document and will be regularly updated. The eagle-eyed amongst you immediately spotted some errors or requested clarifications and additions, so I have already made some changes. Rather than repeatedly email updated copies out, here is a link to the most up to date version: [Remote Teaching Handbook V3](#)

Changes include some additional platforms you can use and removal of some potential barriers in terms of using Google classroom and Zoom. I will let you know through this update if I make further changes.

OAK NATIONAL ACADEMY

I know many of you have been looking at the Oak National Academy lessons and considering whether to use them moving forward. I've also been sampling the lessons, which is helped by having two children at home whose school have elected to use them!

My view is that some of the content is fantastic and *some* heads of department/subject leaders *may* wish to use them at their discretion. One benefit is, if the content is suitable for your students and your curriculum, it could be helpful in saving you time and freeing you up to focus on working on your own curriculum development.

Having said that, not all the content is equal and in addition, because of our school culture, understanding of retrieval practice and coherent curriculum, I don't think the offer is necessarily better than the work you are setting so perhaps the Oak curriculum isn't as handy for us as it is for other schools.

For this reason, our schools will not be adopting the Oak curriculum/lessons to replace our own wholesale.

I would suggest you take your time in deciding whether to use the lessons. Although the academy are setting the lessons by a daily schedule, the old lessons will remain available by subject and topic. By pausing, you will get a better understanding of how their lessons develop over time before deciding whether to use them with students.

I have summarised the pros and cons of the Oak lessons below – informed by my own opinion and that of staff who contacted me with feedback. I'm also suggesting you ask yourself the following questions in judging whether a lesson/series of lessons is right for your students:

- Is the content aligned with your curriculum? Is this a suitable time for your pupils to cover/review this content?
- Is it covering content you have already taught (which is preferable/in line with our current approach) rather than introducing brand new content?
- Is the content aligned with your teaching approach (ie if you teach a specific way of doing something, will it confuse students to promote a different method)?
- Will all your pupils be able to access the video-based lesson, due to limited data or device availability? If not, what will you provide as an alternative?
- How will you ask students to submit their work? Do you want to assess their progress, if so how?
- Is it as good as or better than what you already planned to set?

- Are you assured of the quality of the lessons? Have you checked they work and all the components are available?
- If appropriate, have you consulted with your colleagues? Is it suitable for their pupils too?
- How does it mesh into your curriculum coherence long term – i.e. will retrieval be based on things you taught pre-lockdown and will it be possible for you to arrange your curriculum to retrieve the Oak curriculum post-lockdown (and will doing this make more work for you than you save by using the lessons?)

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent approach – starting with a recap quiz, video input, independent practice. Pupils will quickly learn what to expect • Very clear expectations laid out at the start of each video – pupils are told what they need to complete the lesson • The better videos give context to the learning. Reach Academy primary teachers seems particularly good at this – for example there was some really lovely stuff about being geographers in the Y1 lesson before they got into the lesson content • Some very good quality delivery • The better videos are engaging and feel like a familiar lesson with a proper teacher • The better videos make a real effort to build some sort of relationship with the pupil • It being sequenced from lesson to lesson improves its appeal over time as opposed to other online resources, which may feel more like one offs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not all subjects are available (yet) • Video content is lengthy (20 to 25 mins-ish) which is a problem for pupils with limited data or sharing devices • If you want to track participation you would need them to send you evidence (screenshot) of their work • Obviously, the main barrier is the relevance of the content to our pupils' stage of learning • We don't yet have a sense of the long-term curriculum they are offering and how it synchs with ours

As teachers, you are best placed to decide what the best choice is for you and your pupils.

USING VIDEOS

The Oak lessons rely on video, and many of us are finding video content useful in guiding students – either content we make ourselves or sourced online. Please just be aware that not only do some families have limited data, but that with parents and children working from home via Zoom/FaceTime and relying on online video for entertainment and education, even those with “unlimited” data may well be reaching the limits of their usage policy in the small print. Lots of families share data plans on their phones, so it might be they have 10GB for 3 children all trying to watch 1/2 GB videos and YouTubes.

Even a fairly succinct video recorded on an iPhone used as a visualiser or a screen recording of a voiced-over document could be 300 to 400MB. This is not to say we shouldn't use video content at all, but bearing these issues in mind means we can ensure it is more effective when we do use it.

If you are using video content aim to:

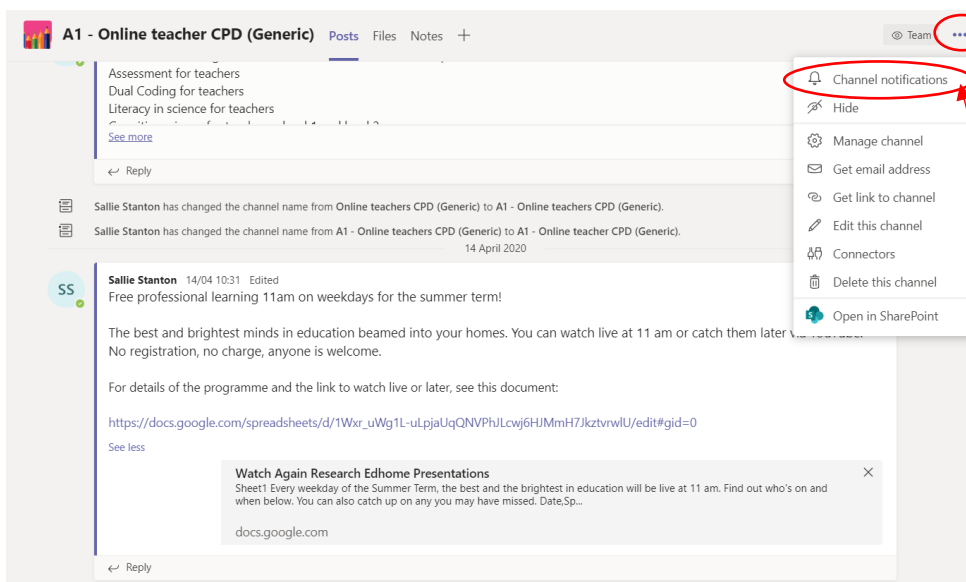
- If possible, when you are providing the content, change the settings to the lowest quality
- If directing student to a YouTube (or Oak) video, direct them to change the settings to the lowest quality before viewing
- Use video when it is most useful rather than habitually
- If possible, make the video content optional by providing an alternative non-video resource
- Encourage pupils to let you know if they are not able to access video content

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

There is no expectation from the trust that you engage with copious amounts of professional learning during lockdown as we are under no illusions as to how busy, exhausting and unsettling the current situation is for many of you. Equally, some of you have expressed a desire to engage with professional learning opportunities. A lot has been made freely available online but, as you can imagine, it is of variable quality.

To support you in finding quality professional learning opportunities I have added all teachers, TAs and learning mentors to a Professional Learning team in Teams where I will post links and files that I think are worth your consideration. There is already plenty to get you started, with all the videos referenced in the Remote Teaching Handbook saved under the “files” tab, and upcoming opportunities posted in the Online Teacher CPD channel. I’ve also created subject specific channels for leaders and HoDs to share training with their staff. Here’s a link to the team.

You can adjust your settings on Teams so that whenever I post an update advertising more professional learning, you are notified.



To get notifications, open the Professional Learning Team, and click on the three dots in the top right-hand corner.

Then click on Channel notifications.

This will bring up a new window and you can then select the type of notifications you prefer.

If you notice anything you think will be useful to include in the Team, please let me know. Likewise, if you need any support with anything or would like to talk things through, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

RESEARCH EDHOME

I would particularly like to highlight the Research Edhome programme, offering free sessions at 11am each weekday. There are some excellent speakers lined up on the schedule, which is available here:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Wxr_uWg1L-uLpjaUqQNVPhJLcwj6HJMmH7JkztvrwU/edit#gid=0

For many of us, even if we want to it simply isn’t possible to log on at such a precise time, so you can access any of the sessions at your own convenience through this YouTube link (which is also linked in the Professional Learning team): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1awWjuY1Jb4&list=PL-y-8wn6dL1UaVoSwAvE8QjhDeunacUck>

HIGHLIGHTS

Each week, I highlight what the best sessions were in the last week, and flag up any I think may interest you in the next week.

LAST WEEK'S PROFESSIONAL LEARNING HIGHLIGHT



[Adam Boxer on Dual Coding For Teachers Who Can't Draw: Improving Explanations](#)

This practical session builds on all we have learnt from The Learning Scientists, and really challenges us to consider the impact of what we do in the classroom.



SPOTLIGHT ON NEXT WEEK

Monday	Dylan Wiliam	CREATING THE SCHOOLS OUR CHILDREN NEED	May be of interest to school leaders or those wanting to think about the value of a knowledge rich curriculum
Wednesday	Matt Hood & Sam Twiselton	WHAT IS EDUCATOR EXPERTISE AND HOW DO WE DEVELOP IT?	May be of interest to school leaders and teacher educators

I hope for those of you wanting some professional learning this gives you a useful starting point!

Have a lovely weekend.

Best wishes,

Sallie