Support for Pupils Working from Home

Some of you may be eligible for extra time in assessments and tests and are finding working at home more demanding in terms of the time it is taking you. Many of you could most likely benefit from some tips and advice in managing working from home. These tips should help. You can contact Mrs Garnett on a.garnett@lggs.lancs.sch.uk if you need any support with any difficulties you are having with your work.

Make the most of technology

Immersive Reader – Using a word document, select View then Immersive Reader. Immersive reader will read aloud words, sentences or whole texts. You can change spacing widths and column widths, change background theme. Select grammar options to highlights nouns, adjectives etc, change line focus and replay as often as needed.

Read aloud to yourself – this is really helpful if you find it hard to process information visually. You can read your text aloud and listen to it yourself. This is an access arrangement that we are able to provide for exams so if it helps you and it becomes your normal way of working you can do this in exams.

Change background colour without using Immersive Reader – some of you use overlays when you are reading, this is not always possible when you are working on a computer although you can put your overlay over the screen if that helps. If not you can change the background colour of the screen by selecting Design and then Page Colour. You can alter the colour so that it is easier to see the words on screen. Not everyone can read black text on a white background and altering the background colour might help you if you are tired or finding it hard to absorb what the text says. Most people find a pale orange or pink helpful for tired eyes to help them focus.

Create a PowerPoint presentation of the material you need to know for an exam. (Think of it as a high-tech version of flash cards.) You can use immersive reader to read slides back to you if needed.

Plan written work on a computer, which can be more efficient and easier to read than messy handwriting. Using a computer allows you to focus on the content rather than your handwriting so you can get your thoughts out in the first draft. And when you make edits, you won't need to write the entire essay over again.

Microsoft Word has a dictation element that will enable you to speak into your microphone and then appraise the words once they have been written on word. To select Dictation go to Home – Dictation. You must have a microphone enabled to use this.
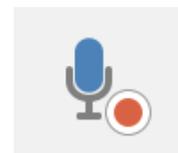
After you complete a writing assignment, whether it's a paragraph or a longer paper, read it aloud and record it on your mobile. (You can also have a member of your family read it to you.) Listening to what you wrote as you read it over several times can help you spot errors and identify changes you'd like to make. Listening as you read your notes also helps you understand and remember what you've learned.

Listen to books in audio form, reading along in the hard copy.

Use time productively

Break up big projects into smaller, less intimidating pieces. If you have a large assignment due set dates for working on little tasks related to the paper, like picking a topic, doing your research and writing a first draft. Don't be afraid to email your teacher or ask someone to assist you write a timeframe that this would work in.
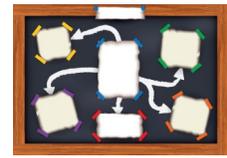
Set yourself time to work slowly and carefully. You don't want to rush or end up missing some of the task.

Prioritise what should be handed in first. If you're faced with a long list of short assignments, it's easy to just grab them all at once and start working in random order. But that's not the most effective approach. Take a minute to prioritise your work according to what's due first and what is likely to take you the most or least time to complete. Study tonight for the French essay due in tomorrow, not the vocabulary test that's coming up next week.

Don't fall into the "no work today" trap. If your calendar is clear, look ahead to see what's coming up. Use this free time to get a head start on the work you need to complete later.

Outline a task before you start. For an essay on plant growth, what materials will you need to gather? How many days will you have to allow for the beans to sprout? How long will it take you to write up your results? Think it through in your head and work out what steps you'll have to take so you know what you'll need and how much time to allow to get it done.

Don't do more than you have to. For instance, you don't have to research everything on a topic to write a few lines in answer to a question.

Preview reading to identify words you can't pronounce and use Immersive Reader to support you.

Helpful tips for Reading

Get prepared **before** you begin your work, make sure everything you need is printed out or ready to hand to refer to.

• Scan – look through the text quickly initially for key words, not ignoring any illustrations, diagrams or graphs. Important information is often highlighted in a text box or in bold or italics.
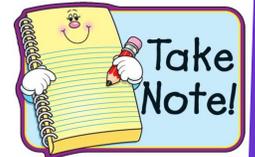
• Question – ask yourself what information you hope to get from your reading.

• Read – read the text fully using the method below

• Remember – write down the main points as you work through your text

• Review – scan again to check if you have remembered correctly.

If the text you are reading is long, break it into smaller steps and read in sections. If it is recommended in your IEP that you "re-read" instead of reading from the beginning to end three times break the reading into smaller sections and cover the rest of the reading with plain paper. Read the section. Then re-read that section until you understand. Write any notes on that section then move on, covering what you have just read. It is easier to absorb information in this way than it is to re-read long text over and over.

Read all directions at least twice before you start your task. Highlight the key words in the sentence.

Keeping Email Organised

Once you start using email often, you will soon find messages clogging up your Inbox. Once you've read them, you might want to organise your email by storing messages, deleting them, archiving them and moving them elsewhere.

It can be useful to think of your email in the same way as paperwork. You probably already have a system for organising your work sheets and if you didn't you would pretty soon be overwhelmed.

Storing Messages

Outlook provides an option to create folders for storing mail. In your left-hand column under inbox you will see Folders. Right click on folders and create a new folder.

You can create folders based on the category, for a particular teacher, or for a particular lesson. It is entirely up to you. If you decide you don't need a folder any more, you can easily delete it – just remember that its contents will be deleted too.

You can also create sub-folders within folders in the same way.

Moving Messages

To move messages from one folder to another for example, from your Inbox to a folder you have created you can usually 'drag and drop', or highlight the message and use the menus or select a number of emails in your inbox by clicking on them and then choose the option to move them into your chosen folder.

Organising How you View your Mail

You can view the contents of your folders by date, sender or subject. You can also sort them in ascending or descending order.

Colour Coding Messages

If you are a visual learner you can colour code your emails so you can associate a colour with a subject. On the top line select categorise and choose the colour. When you click on this colour all of the

Embrace Simple Solutions

Break down content into smaller chunks rather than trying to tackle everything on an entire sheet or in a book chapter will make studying far less overwhelming. Use flash cards or post it notes as a portable study guide to keep on hand and quiz yourself whenever you have a few minutes to spare.

Work in a quiet place with few distractions. Ear plugs or noise-cancelling headphones can help to block out noises that distract you.

Give yourself visuals to work from and help strengthen your memory. Examples: Use diagrams for capturing the structure of a story or for remembering historical figures; use highlighters or color-coding to bring out the main ideas in your notes, drafts or worksheets; create symbols, initials or doodles to help you remember concepts.