

1<sup>st</sup> May 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

### **Update letter for families – 1<sup>st</sup> May**

I hope that this week's letter finds you all well and coping. Although the weather has been less glorious, there are positives to be found in the reduction in infections and associated deaths we are seeing. Staying at home and protecting the NHS is clearly having an impact, and it is encouraging to see the national discussion begin to turn to how we should plan for a return to a more 'normal' way of living.

Although we are not yet able to plan for a return to school, we have now passed the milestone of having been closed (for most!) for twenty school days. This represents about 10% of a school year. Across our family of schools, we have been planning for how to ensure that online learning activities are appropriate and maintain your child's progress. We have taken feedback from lots of you about what is working well and what could be improved. Thank you for this, it has been very helpful and has informed some of what we are shaping for the days and weeks ahead.

We absolutely understand how difficult home learning can be (many of us are doing it ourselves). We really want our students to attempt the learning activities set and engage with their classes and teachers through Microsoft TEAMS, but we also know that this isn't always easy. We will not be punishing those students who are struggling, or who don't complete the work set. Teachers or tutors will have contacted students by the end of this week to find out how you are getting on – not to check up on you, but to encourage you and discuss any barriers you face. I hope these discussions have been useful; you can expect such contact to continue over this period of closure and throughout what may well be a phased return.

So far, the learning activities we have set have been mostly 'asynchronous' - meaning work is left for students to complete when they choose. Over the coming weeks, we will begin to schedule some occasional 'live' sessions over Microsoft TEAMS in some subjects and for some year groups. This may be to provide an opportunity for discussion between the class, to enable the teacher to model or explain new content, or to provide feedback. Students will be invited to join such sessions through TEAMS. Equally, it may become more common for teachers to leave recorded clips of them talking through a presentation or modelling a concept. All of this will help us introduce new curriculum content and maintain those essential links between the students and their teachers.

### **Childcare Provision for the children of key workers and vulnerable students**

Although next Friday (8<sup>th</sup> May) is a designated Bank Holiday, our childcare provision will remain open for children of key workers. You will need to book your place, as usual, via the link to access provision on this day and/or future days. Register your need on the [survey linked here](#).

The guidance around eligibility of places for the children and key workers, as well as those students who may be deemed as 'vulnerable' [can be read here](#).

If you have any questions about the provision that are not answered through the link above, please contact [worried@elycollege.co.uk](mailto:worried@elycollege.co.uk)

### Transport

There are currently two services running to bring eligible children to the college for our childcare provision. Both will be small minibus-type vehicles operated by **Lords Travel**.

<b>Route A:</b> Soham & Fordham to Ely College	<b>Route B:</b> Littleport, Pymoor & Little Downham to Ely College
Monday to Friday during term time	Monday to Friday during term time
0740hrs - Soham – Townsend/Northfield 0748hrs - Fordham – Collins Hill 0754hrs - Isleham – Pound Lane Bus Shelter 0806hrs - Prickwillow – 4 Mile End 0808hrs - Prickwillow – Kingdon Ave 0811hrs - Queen Adelaide – Bus Shelter 0815hrs - Ely College	0745hrs - Hale Fen – 21 Hale Fen 0755hrs - Littleport – Crescent 0757hrs - Littleport - Crown Lane 0802hrs - Littleport – Wisbech Road – Butchers Hill Farm 0810hrs - Pymoor – Corner 0816hrs - Little Downham – Cannon Street 0820hrs - Ely College
A return service, covering the route in the reverse order will be offered from the College on conclusion of the day’s activities, departing between 3:00pm and 3:30pm.	A return service, covering the route in the reverse order will be offered from the College on conclusion of the day’s activities, departing between 3:00pm and 3:30pm.

### Parents’ evenings and reports

Please note that we still intend to send home progress reports to parents of students in Years 7 and 9. Year 7 reports will be sent home during the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> June, and Year 9 reports will go home the week commencing 15<sup>th</sup> June.

We are currently exploring the viability of parents’ evenings for the remainder of the academic year. The nature and scheduling of consultations will depend upon when school re-opens and what restrictions may be in place at that time. Online solutions are also being explored. Details will follow in the coming weeks.

### VE Day Anniversary – 8<sup>th</sup> May

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May is a designated Bank Holiday to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day. Learning activities will still be available for students to complete should they wish, but we know that many families will want to mark this important milestone. We will ask that teachers do not contact families on the day. I know that there are a number of related activities planned in some subject areas to mark the day.

### Online adult learning platform to develop workplace skills

A new [online learning platform](#) to help develop workplace skills while people are staying at home was launched this week. The new platform gives adults access to free digital and numeracy courses to help build up their skills, progress in work and boost their job prospects. I hope this is of interest to some families.

## Learn Together Cambridgeshire and Dyslexia-friendly reading lists

Those of you seeking additional resources or ideas may find [this website](#) from [Learn Together Cambridgeshire](#) a useful compendium of some of the resources available to support wider home learning. Students with dyslexia may also find some helpful [dyslexia-friendly reading suggestions at this website](#).

### Year 11 'Hoodies'

Some students and families have asked about the 'Hoodies' they have ordered. Please note that once they have been delivered and checked we will communicate the best way to safely arrange their collection.

Once again, for those of you who are finding this time difficult, we have a range of advice and contacts for support on our website under the tab '[Feeling worried or anxious?](#)'.

Please continue to take good care of yourselves.

Yours faithfully



Richard Spencer  
Principal



## If home isn't safe, support is available

**If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic abuse, you can get help:**

Cambridge Women's Aid (City, East, South Cambridgeshire): 01223 361214

Refuge (Fenland, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough): 07787 255821

National Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0808 2000 247

Men's Advice Line: 0808 801 0327

LGBT Helpline: 0800 999 5428

In an emergency call 999

For more information visit [www.cambsdasa.org.uk](http://www.cambsdasa.org.uk)



At National Online Safety we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information they need to build an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one platform of many which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) for further guides, tips and tips for adults.



Founded in 2011, Zoom is one of the world's leading video conferencing software providers. It has a number of features, including video and audio conferencing, real-time messaging, screen-sharing and the ability to upload, share and search for content. Users can start their own meetings or they can join meetings set up by others. The app is available to use across PCs, laptops, tablets and mobile phones and is free to download on both the app store and on Android.



# What parents need to know about zoom



### ZOOM BOMBING

Zoom bombing is the term which has been coined to describe unwanted people joining Zoom meetings without the consent of the host. These individuals can share content, hijack a meeting if they know the meeting ID and if it is unsecured with a password. Not taking preventative measures or implementing privacy controls could open up the risk of children accessing content or inappropriate content with any little notice.

### RISK OF PHISHING

The ease of accessibility of Zoom has led to a rise in phishing attacks and phishing attempts. This is where participants are encouraged to click on links or join what they believe to be legitimate Zoom meetings via email, but which are in fact fraudulent. There is a risk that children could be tricked into providing personal information such as their login details, passwords and/or credit card information.

### PRIVACY CONCERNS

Depending on how the app has been set up, Zoom can offer very little security in many ways. The meeting hosts can see detailed information about each participant including their full name, phone numbers and email addresses. Furthermore, depending on where the camera has been set up or where your child's computer is positioned, anyone or just your child could be able to see what is on the screen in the background.

### LIVE RECORDINGS

One of the features of Zoom is the ability to record live meetings. By default, only the host of the meeting can actually record live content. However, other meeting attendees can also record if the host gives them access. Recordings can be stored on devices or on the cloud and can be downloaded and shared with no restrictions. This means that videos, audio clips and transcripts of recordings involving your children could be widely shared on the internet or between users without your authorisation or consent.

### PRIVATE ZOOM MEETINGS

Zoom has a facility to set up breakout rooms, which enables a private meeting within the main Zoom session. The host can choose to split the participants of the original meeting into separate sessions. This gives children the ability to speak privately away from the main group to other users however their email address is always monitored by the host and if the meeting has been made public, children could be more vulnerable to experiencing targeted attacks.

### 'LIVE STREAMING' RISKS

At its very core, Zoom facilitates live streaming. This means if inevitably crashes, some of the information that has been shared, there are likely to be minimal controls in a controlled environment. For instance, when used in a classroom setting for remote learning. However, live streaming means that content isn't always moderated and children who use the app unauthorised or with limited security settings may be more at risk of exposure to viewing inappropriate material. Children can also be easily tricked into providing personal information or being targeted for grooming.

## Safety Tips For Parents

### REPORT INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

Remind your child that if they do see something that makes them feel uncomfortable or upset then they need to talk about it and report it. Parents can report inappropriate activity, harassment, and cyberbullying to Zoom directly. To help your child, you could try setting up a checklist before they go online, with an agreed set of rules and what they should do if they see something inappropriate.

### USER PRIVATE MEETING IDS & PASSWORDS

It is always better to set up a meeting with a custom ID number generated by Zoom than by using a personal number. This means it is harder to guess and less likely to be hacked. It's important to never share meeting IDs with anyone you don't know and always set up a personal function to allow other people to sign in. This should always be a default setting that is applied on Zoom.

### PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL DATA

It's important to discuss with your child that they should not share personal information on Zoom. This includes passwords, their address, phone numbers, etc. Create your child's account under a false name or pseudonym and always set a custom background to help hide details in your home. Zoom allows you to turn on virtual backgrounds and select your own image to appear behind you.

### BEWARE OF PHISHING EMAILS

Every time you or your child gets a Zoom link, it's good practice to ensure it has come from the official platform and is not fraudulent. Signs of a phishing email include an unrecognisable email address, an unofficial domain name or a slightly distorted logo. The email itself might also be poorly written or contain suspicious attachments.

### TURN OFF UNNECESSARY FEATURES

If your child is using Zoom, there are a number of features that you can turn off to make the experience safer for them. For instance, disabling the ability to transfer files or engaging in private chats can help to limit the risk of receiving any malicious attachments or receiving any inappropriate messages. In addition, you can turn off the camera if it is not needed or mute the microphone when not in use.

### USE THE 'VIRTUAL WAITING ROOM' FEATURE

The waiting room feature on Zoom means that anybody who wants to join a meeting or live stream cannot automatically join and must wait for the host to screen them before entering. This is now a default function and adds another layer of security to reduce the likelihood of zoom bombing.

### KEEP YOUR VERSION UPDATED

It's important to ensure you are using the latest version of Zoom available and always update it if you get a prompt. These updates are usually to fix security holes and without the update you will be more vulnerable to an attack. Check the official website to see what the latest version is and compare it to your own.

### HOST IMPLEMENTED PRIVACY CONTROLS

If your child is part of a larger group meeting, then it's important to make sure that the host is doing by Zoom's Terms of Service. This includes the fact that they have gained everybody's permission for the session to be recorded. The host should also have set screen sharing to 'host only' and disabled 'file transfer' to help keep the live stream secure.

### Meet our expert

Emma Davis is a cyber security expert and former ICT teacher. She delivers cyber awareness training to organisations nationally and has extensive knowledge and experience of managing how children access services and apps online.



SOURCES: <https://zoom.us/privacy> | <https://zoom.us/helpcenter/zoom-administrator-%20guide%20for%20the%20host%20of%20a%20zoom-meeting> | <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/sep/02/zoom-technology-security-complaints-video-conferencing>