



## **Guide to Distance Learning for Parents & Carers**

**March 2020**

# Introduction to Distance Learning

Your child may be invited to take part in a number of 'virtual lessons' while the school is closed. The lessons are designed to continue learning, ensuring that any disruption to your child's education is kept to an absolute minimum.

In order to take part in these virtual lessons, your child will need access to a desktop computer, a laptop computer, or a tablet. No special software is required, and they do not need a webcam. If your child's device does have a webcam, it will not be used, and nobody will be able to access it. All your child needs is access to a web browser, such as Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, or Apple Safari.

Your child's virtual lessons will take place on the school's Learning Platform, **Aspire**. This can be accessed by going to **<https://aspire.invictus.education>** and logging on as usual.



# The New Aspire Homepage

During the time that the school is closed, your child's homepage on **Aspire** will be simplified. It will show a list of upcoming virtual lessons, the school noticeboard, and any homework that has been set for your child. Your child can also access subject resources as usual.

It is important that your child logs on regularly so that he or she is kept up to date with the times of their virtual lessons – these may change at short notice.

The screenshot shows the Aspire homepage for a student named Josephine. The page has a blue header with navigation icons for Subjects, Homework, Calendar, and E-mail. Below the header is a main navigation bar with links to Homepage, My Merits, My Positives (70), My Timetable, Progress Tracker, Reports, and a Search bar. The main content area is divided into three sections:

- Upcoming Virtual Lessons:**
  - Maths Lesson: Monday 30th April, 11:00am
  - English Lesson: Monday 30th April, 1:00pm
  - D&T Revision Session: Tuesday 31st April, 9:00am
  - ICT Coursework Session: Tuesday 31st April, 10:00am
- School Noticeboard:**
  - Maths Revision Classes:** Posted by Mr Smith on Monday. If you are in 11a1 or 11b1 please ensure that you join the online lesson taking place on Monday at 11am.
  - Need Any Help?:** Posted by Mrs Jones on Friday. Please e-mail your teachers if you're not sure about any of your homework.
- Homework:**
  - Science - Mr S Skidmore: Spring Term 2 - Task 2 (Overdue)
  - Geography - Mrs S Davies: Create a seneca Learning account
  - Dance - Mr N Wyer: Pyramus and Thisbe Project

A left-hand sidebar contains icons for various subjects and services: Army Cadets, Art, Careers Education, Dance, DofE Award, English, Enrichment, Geography, History, ICT, Maths, Music, PE, Science, SEND, Spanish, Tutorial, Cafeteria, and Exam Timetable.

*The homepage that your child will see upon logging on*

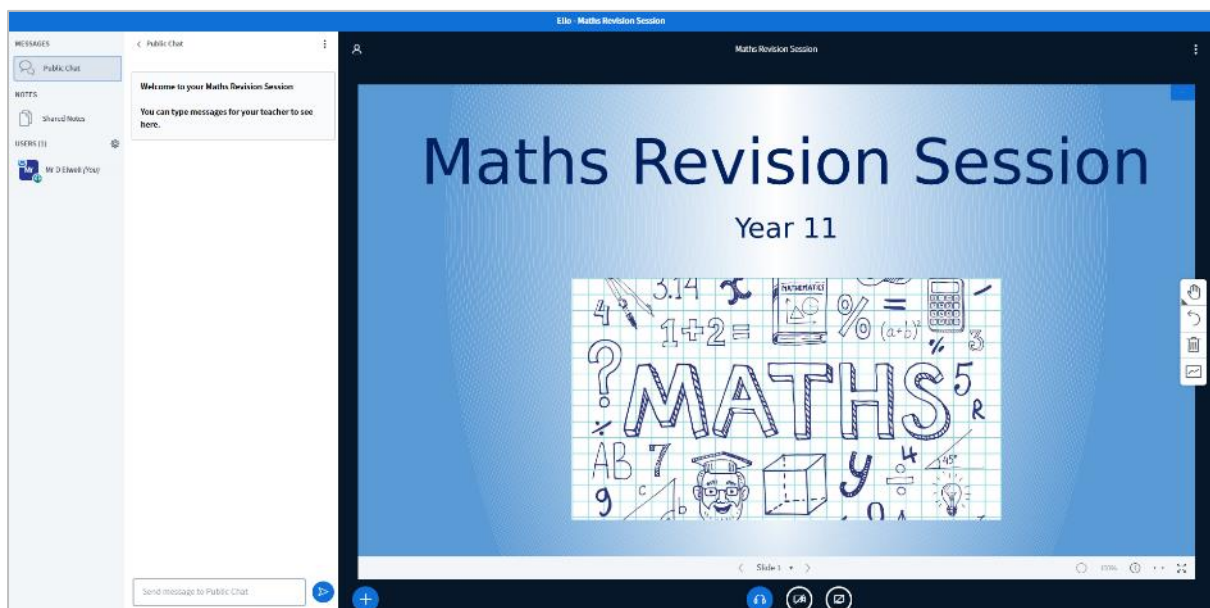
# Virtual Lessons

Your child's teachers will schedule virtual lessons using Aspire. These lessons will take place at specific times, and it is important that your child is present for them - these times are shown on your child's Aspire homepage. Your child should be sat at their computer or tablet at the prescribed time, ready to take part.

Your child will participate in virtual lessons in a number of ways. Some teachers may use a webcam, in which case your child will be able to see their teacher on the screen. Some teachers will use just a microphone, so your child will be able to hear what the teacher is saying. Some teachers will use just text-based chat, so your child will see what the teacher is typing to them.

In all cases, the teacher will have available to them a virtual whiteboard, where they can display notes, slides, and annotations. Your child will see the teacher changing slides and making annotations as they are teaching the lesson.

During the virtual lesson, your child may be set tasks to complete. These tasks can be submitted to the teacher using Aspire, where the teacher can mark the work and provide feedback. Your child is able to hold a text-based conversation with the teacher, should they require help.



*An example of a virtual classroom for a Maths revision session*

# Homework on Aspire

During the school closure, your child's teachers will set homework using Aspire. This homework will be shown on the homepage that your child sees, with the topic, task, and due date being clearly labelled. Your child can complete the work on their computer or tablet, then upload it to Aspire. Homework that is uploaded is marked online by your child's teachers with feedback being provided.

Any resources that your child needs to complete the homework – for example, PowerPoint presentations, or links to web sites, will be provided within the homework itself.

Please encourage your child to complete and submit all homework on time. You may notice that the amount of homework being set is higher than normal, however it should be remembered that this homework is replacing the classwork that your child would normally complete in school.

Task Folder  
Autumn Term 2 - Task 2

**Practical Skills Homework**      **Part 2 Planning**

**Investigation of Friction**

My **HYPOTHESIS** today is that an object will travel further on a smooth surface than on a rough surface.

**Q1) Look at the diagram of the equipment needed to test the hypothesis. Can you correctly label the equipment using the labels in the box below**

ruler      balloon      Direction of travel

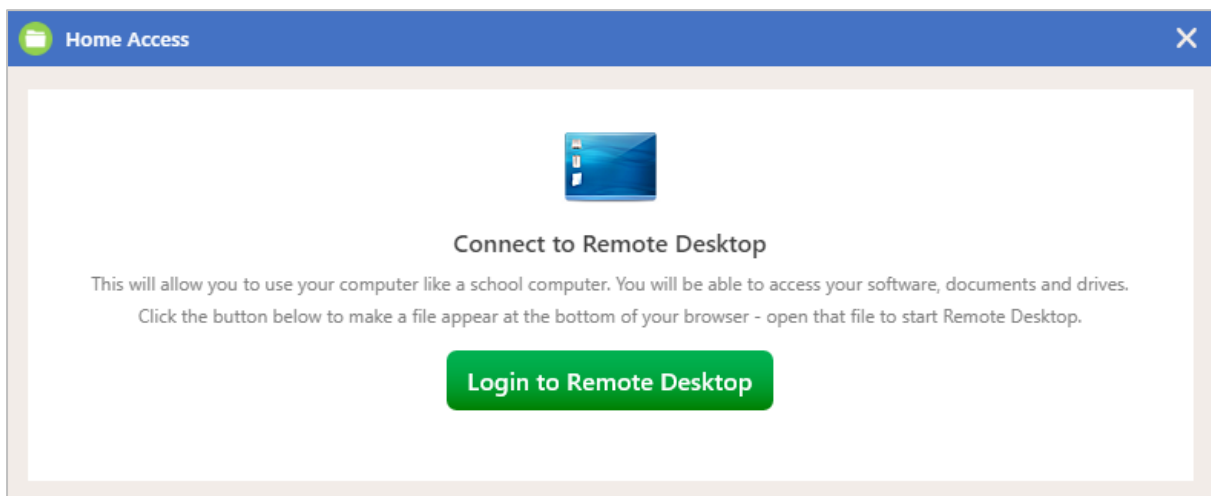
*An example of Science homework being set using Aspire*

# Software and Documents

Your child will have a number of documents stored on school computers. These documents can be accessed from your home computer or tablet using the school's **Home Access** system. Your child may already be aware of how to use this.

To use **Home Access** your child should log on to **Aspire** as usual, then click the **Home Access** button, and follow the on-screen instructions. Your child will be able to access their documents, any shared documents that they may need, and also use any school specific software. Because of this, your home computer or tablet does not need any specific software to be purchased or installed for your child to complete their homework.

The **Home Access** feature can be accessed from any computer and at any time.



*The Home Access window, giving access to your child's documents, drives, and software*

## Help for Your Child

Should your child require help or clarification during a virtual lesson, your child can type a message to the teacher, which the teacher can reply to instantly. If your child needs to contact a teacher outside of lesson, they can use their school e-mail account to send a message, which the teacher can reply to at the earliest opportunity.

If your child experiences any technical problems during a virtual lesson, they should let their teacher know. The teacher can then report the problem to the ICT Support Team for assistance.

## Privacy and Safeguarding

When in a virtual lesson your child's webcam and microphone are never used – the feature has been explicitly turned off. Using Aspire, your child is not able to see other students, and other students are not able to see your child. Your child is able to see messages posted by other students, but these are also overseen by your child's teacher, who is able to remove any inappropriate messages.

You should always be mindful about when your child is using their computer or tablet alone, especially for long periods. When at school, your child benefits from a number of Internet safety systems, however this may not be the case when using the Internet at home.

You can get help with protecting your child online from the Safer Internet Centre, by visiting <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk>

