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Recommendations to Parents on how to support learning at home during temporary suspension of obligatory regular attendance of Pupils

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Introduction

This document presents to the parents and guardians a series of recommendations and advice to help them accompany their children in home studies during exceptional temporary suspension of obligatory regular attendance of pupils at school.

It will be revised in the light of the experience we will gain in the coming weeks.

General questions and answers

Should parents become teachers?

Teaching is a complex profession that requires expertise. Don't worry: that's not what is asked of parents. Parent's mission is simply to help the children maintain continuity in their learning.

Do teachers explain subjects to students during studies at home? Can students ask additional questions?

During studies at home all teachers will do their best to provide necessary information, including study materials and support materials to all the students. As usual, students (parents in Nursery and Primary) will have questions and for sure most of them are similar among all the students, therefore using an online means for questions and answers and sharing is necessary. By using common online networks and /or online environments more students can benefit from someone's question and the teacher's response.

We also recommend keeping close virtual contact between students and among parents.

How to motivate and keep the attention on schoolwork when studying at home?

Set up an indoor space for learning activities with the material that might be needed.

Vary the activities throughout the day (waking up, studying, breaks and exercises, exchange of information). Explain the new situation to your child (you will find plenty of resources and videos in your language, adapted to your child's age) ¹.

¹ "Whether you're concerned about the new coronavirus, or about the idea of your children staying home from school for an indefinite period of time, it's essential to remain calm, frame for your kids what's unfolding in clear terms and separate rumors from reality. Explain to your daughter or son, in an age-appropriate way, that in many cases, schools are closing in an effort to slow the spread of this virus in the wider community [...]. It's also important to reinforce that, in the grand scheme of things, even a few weeks off will one day be a "remember when" story and nothing more." Source: [The New York Times](#).

All students need some supervision and encouragement during home studies. If possible, take a couple of check-ups during the day. In case your child needs supervision at home, arrange it with the help of family members if possible.

How to organise the day (Nursery and Primary)?

1/ Get your children up at a fixed time every morning! Likewise, put them to bed at a reasonable time. They are not on holiday.

2/ The children will get bored and the temptation of the screens will be great. Two pieces of advice: limit screen time (play, passive consumption) and accept that they will get bored! Offer them to play, read, help you cook...

3/ Plan a schedule². Children won't work 6 hours a day but you can organise working hours of 10 to 30 min several times a day, depending on the age of the children.

They must have varied activities.

There are many playful supports (on the internet or games) and the teachers will make proposals (see Annex 1 for useful links and tips).

4/ Take the time to talk with your children to reassure them, value them, encourage them. It's not easy for them either!

How can I support my child during the studies?

By talking to your child and his/her teacher and considering previous grades and feedback, define the volume and aspects in which your child needs support.

If possible, keep in contact with your child during study time. Encourage your child to ask questions. When your child needs additional support which you cannot provide, contact the teacher and plan the support activities together.

Include your child in agreeing upon rules at home, support your child in following the rules agreed with school. Keep an eye on progress with schoolwork and deadlines.

It is important to have breaks from studies. During the breaks, students should have more practical and physical activities, not spend the breaks in their smartphones.

² Research shows that children are more likely to thrive with predictable, consistent routines at home that provide, among other things, a sense of security, and help their social and emotional well-being. This source of stability will be even more critical during what may be a prolonged period without the structure of a normal school day. Source: [New York Times](#).

How to organise distance learning in a multiple children family when access to digital appliances is limited? (P5 & Secondary)

If there is one or too few computers for the whole family: create if possible different personal accounts for the different users (e.g. on [MacOS](#) or [Windows](#)).

Also, students can use the mobile apps for smartphones and tablets. Especially the mobile app “Teams” can be used to see the latest assignment, participating in (video) chats, turning in work...

It is also possible to create different user profiles on most of the browsers³.

Are studies at home organised according to timetables? Do students need to have continued online presence during the studies?

Studies at home do not mean that the student must keep constant online presence throughout the school-day.

Sometimes, teachers may call a group in for a video-chat. This could be done according to the timetable of the group. This is also a possibility for Nursery and Primary (under parents' supervision).

In Secondary, the time for studies should be similar to study schedules used at school.

How are organised support systems (speech therapy, special pedagogy, support teacher etc.) for children receiving educational support at school level?

During studies at home all parents have an additional role in supporting learning. This new role may be challenging. Educational support activities are assured in the context of distance teaching and learning. In case of questions or parental support needed, we recommend contacting the support or class teachers to get information or parental support. In case of therapy and support provided in the context of tripartite agreements, parents should organise those services with the concerned expert(s).

Do I need to take up new online environments and create new accounts in social media?

Communication between school and students is organised by the school, schools can help with finding suitable solutions and platforms as well. For daily communication we recommend to keep using already existing and familiar networks and platforms. It is important to ensure information to all parties, considering everyone's possibilities.

³ E.g. [Chrome](#), [Firefox](#), [Edge](#). Safari doesn't appear to support multiple profiles and is not recommended to use with O365, due to observed bugs

What is the tool used for videoconferencing?

Teachers may post video of themselves for their students or need to organise video conferences where students may or may not appear on the screen. In the event students appear on the screen, only live sessions are allowed. No video recordings of students are allowed.

It is important that students and parents use the digital tools communicated by the school.

Secondary school teachers normally use [Teams online meeting](#), accessible with to all secondary school accounts (also in primary already, in some schools).

In some cases, however, in nursery, primary and secondary levels, teachers may choose to use [Zoom.us](#) as an alternative solution. This videoconferencing tool is very complete and easy to use ([user guide](#)) and does not require the creation of an account for the students. In nursery and primary classes, of course, the children will be accompanied by their parents.

Selected interesting online resources for parents

- [Information and advice for parents for supporting their child during the COVID-19 outbreak](#) (Estonia, Curriculum and Methodology Agency of the Foundation Innove).
- [Tips for setting structure and rules at home](#) (US Gov, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).
- Common Sense Media: [Resources for Parents to Prepare for Coronavirus School Closures](#).
- [Advice to parents and carers](#) (NSW education department, Australia).
- [Supporting Kids During the Coronavirus Crisis, Managing Anxiety, Discipline and Behavior](#) (Child Mind Institute).

Nursery and Primary: selection of useful links and activities

Your children will receive work from their teacher(s). However, in case they want more or you need ideas for the rest of the day or the weekends when the work is done, many digital learning resources are available.

Below is a list of suggestions with educational websites and applications to help parents (as well as teachers and schools) facilitate student learning and provide social caring and interaction during periods of school closure. They might provide ideas and support to the families under these particular circumstances and several support multiple languages.

All of them can be used without any personal account, are free and do not display any commercial advertising. These websites and applications are suggestions and therefore, parents are responsible for reading their terms and conditions, as well as privacy policies whenever they would like to create an account. The OSG can't be held responsible for the personal data you choose to share while navigating these websites and applications.

N.B.: most of these websites/applications use cookies. If you want to protect even more your privacy, we suggest browsing the web privately in incognito/private mode (all the information including cookies from the website is discarded when you close the incognito/private browsing window). Please refer to the help of the browser you are using.

Name	Language	Level	Description	website	iOS App	Android App	Price
Gynzy Kids	EN/NL	M1-P5	Online games in different areas from kindergarten to the end of primary school.	X	X	X	FREE
E-learning for kids	EN/FR/ES	M2-P5	Games for different levels as well as lessons in English on a variety of subjects.	X			FREE
Khan Academy	FR/EN	M2-S7	Games mainly in math. The 1st primary level is appropriate for kindergarteners.	X	X	X	FREE

Name	Language	Level	Description	website	iOS App	Android App	Price
Khan Kids	EN	M1-P2	A goldmine of activities. Also creative activities. Also a webpage on How to use Khan Academy Kids for remote learning .		x	x	FREE
Calculatrice	FR	P1-S1	Mental arithmetic with very cool games.	x	x	x	FREE
Les Fondamentaux	FR	M2-P5	400 animated films for learning.	x			FREE
Festival de courts métrages	FR	M1-P5	Lots of great short films.	x			FREE
Mon appli.net	FR	M2-P5	Manipulation, math and French games.	x			FREE
Scratch junior	ALL	M1-P5	Learn how to code animations and games very easily from kindergarten onwards.		x	x	FREE
Matific	ALL	P1-P5	Math exercises and games (connection with the class account).	x	x	x	FREE
Picture to puzzle	FR	M1-P5	Puzzles online. You can choose the image, the number of pieces. You can also import your own pictures or photos.	X			FREE
PBS Kids	EN	M1-P1	A directory for roughly 20 TV and Web-only PBS KIDS shows designed for older preschool and elementary-aged kids. From PBS KIDS kids can navigate directly to a particular show's individual site, where they'll find games, videos, and other related content.	X			FREE

Name	Language	Level	Description	website	iOS App	Android App	Price
Read Write Think	EN	M1-S7	Lessons, interactive activities, printables, and an app to help kids improve their reading and writing skills.	X			FREE
Science Bob	EN	M1-S4	Scientific experiments to be carried out with children	X			FREE
National Geographic kids	EN	P1-P5	Watch animal cameras, learn interesting tidbits about animals, see and share photos of nature, learn about different countries and try science experiments.	X			FREE
Earth	Many	M2-S7	3D representation of Earth and educational content.	X	X	X	FREE
Europeana	Many	M2-S7	Web portal created by the European Union containing digitalised museum collections. More than 3,000 institutions across Europe have contributed to Europeana, including the Rijksmuseum, the British Library and the Louvre.	X			FREE
Museum virtual tours and exhibitions	EN	M2-S7	Guggenheim Museum Museum of Modern Art – MoMA Art & Culture. The British Museum. Tate Modern Gallery Musée d’Orsay Rijksmuseum Van Gogh Museum National Gallery of Art (Washington)	X			FREE

How to help young children (Nursery/P1-P2) to learn at home?

The four **pillars of learning** at this age, especially in a distance learning context are:

- By playing,
- thinking and solving problems,
- practicing
- remembering and memorising

Simply involving your child in your daily activities is a good start to ensure this educational continuity. Here is a non-exhaustive list of activities you can do at home with your child that cover many areas.

- Having children cut up vegetables helps develop their fine motor skills, setting the table allows them to find their way around the space but also to count (the number of place settings and plates, etc.) and to learn how to be of service.
- Cooking: choose a recipe, let the children make it as much as possible by themselves (read it, gather the ingredients, calculate the volumes, follow the steps...). As an adult, you are present to follow what is being done.
- Start an herbarium (learn to recognise some typical flowers or leaves and flatten them to dry for example).
- Harvest branches, moss, shells, stones and propose land art.
- Germinate a bean for example and measure the growth during confinement.
- Reading: let the children take a book they like, let them immerse themselves in it for as long as possible. Otherwise, choose a suitable book (or text) (not too long, with accessible vocabulary), let the child read it or, for the youngest, read the story to them. Regularly, stop and first answer the questions, then ask questions about the meaning of the story.
- Board games with the use of dice to develop numeracy skills.
- Game of "Who's that?" game to learn how to ask questions by isolating variables among the faces.
- Games with cards:
 - recognise the numbers on the cards
 - memory game with the cards: find two cards with the same number
 - rank the cards from smallest to largest
 - play at battle: spot the biggest card
- Letter game: you choose a letter at random and, for several categories (male first name, female first name, city, country, animal...), everyone looks for a word starting with this letter (available from 6 years old). Alternative from the age of 5: choose a letter and find words where you can hear the sound of the letter.

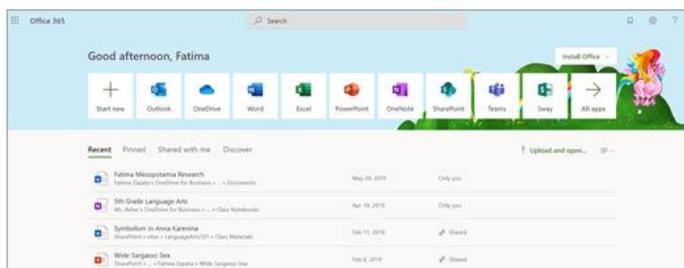
- Playing with post-it notes to make a symmetrical drawing on the living room window (make pixel art).
- Create a small mathematics (or more broadly scientific) observer's notebook: identify, note, and map all the situations where children "see" mathematics (or science), in the house or outside. For example, locate the right angles with the walls of a room, walk on the parallels visible on the tiles, make divisions with cakes, look for multipliers, make packs of ten with a handful of grains of rice, and then count them... Write down questions that are asked from these situations, to leave them at the question stage and to do research.
- Work on vocabulary with pictures or everyday objects (your child must name what you show him/her / what you describe to him/her for older children).
- Practice writing his/her first name (with or without a model depending on your child's progress), numbers and capital letters
- Playing with numbers: counting as far as possible (= reciting the number rhyme), counting everyday objects (the number of forks you put on the table, the number of buttons on the cardigan, the number of fishes added to the bath water...).
- Do puzzles (space location).
- Name simple geometric shapes (hunt for triangular objects, square objects...).
- Construction games (cubes, duplos, legos, kaplas, clipos...) by proposing challenges ("make me a tower with 4 cubes", "build the highest tower possible"...).
- finding objects with an axis of symmetry in the house
- Situate oneself in space: hide an object in the house or apartment and give instructions for the child to find it by giving only words that designate a position in space: in front; behind; below; above; between; to the left; to the right...
- Cut along a line.
- Draw a few lines on a sheet of paper and ask your child to cut out following the curves.
- Make salt dough together and let your child manipulate it.
- Introduce your child to origami (paper folding). Unlimited videos on YouTube.
- A period of confinement is also the ideal time to play. There are many board games and board games, but also games that allow children to have fun with each other or on their own...
- making an animal out of materials found at home
- make a paper airplane and have a family contest to launch it as far as possible.
- Coloring mandalas
- store food packages from the lightest to the heaviest (with a kitchen scale if the weight is not indicated on the packaging)
- Make a little motor course with chairs, tables, cushions, hoops, ... whatever you've got.
- Have your child search the whole house with a magnet to see what "sticks"! Then make a poster of what is attracted by the magnet and what isn't.

Secondary - Distance learning with Office 365: Guidance for parents and guardians

Adapted from [Microsoft Teams for Education](#).

Note: The guidance below is meant to introduce some of the many possibilities for students learning remotely using Office 365. Your student's school may determine different app settings than those referenced below, and their teachers may use Office 365 in different ways that work for their class.

What does my child need to sign in to his/her Office 365 account?



Any pupil of the European secondary schools (and, depending on each school, from P5 or even earlier) can access Office 365 with his/her school account.

Students can log into their school accounts at Office.com, where they'll have access to Microsoft Teams, Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and so much more. From this home base, students can open Office apps in their web browser, or select Install Office to download the desktop versions to their device (download capability may vary depending on the device your child is using).

What are the best devices for my child to use with Office 365?

Any recent computer is sufficient. Office 365 web applications can be used online via a browser (Safari is not always compliant), with any operating system. Office 365 Desktop applications require Windows or MacOS (Linux has only the application Teams). Note that many activities can be performed on a mobile device, with Microsoft Mobile Apps.

More information: <https://products.office.com/en/office-resources>.



How will my child communicate with their teachers and classmates?

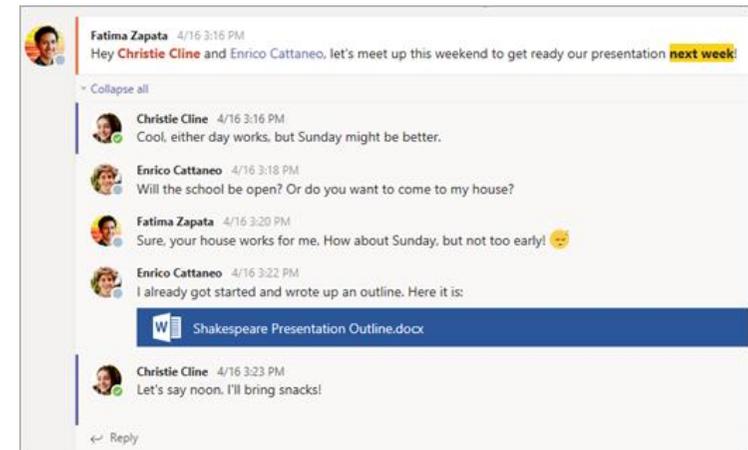
The preferred communication tools are to be decided by each school.

SMS is generally used to send communication to parents and guardians. A combination of SMS and Teams can be used to communicate with students.

The recommended tool generally is Microsoft Teams. Teams is an online classroom hub, where your child can chat with their whole class, in groups with other students, and one-on-one with their teachers. Through Teams, your child can also make video calls.

Tip: Read more with your student about [communicating in Teams](#).

Each of your child's classes (if they have more than one) gets its own team, which is set up by a teacher or an IT Admin.



How does my child join a team?

When your child signs in to his/her school Office 365 account at Office.com and select the Teams app, he/she will see the class teams he/she's in. Your child will also receive an email notification when he/she's been added to a team.

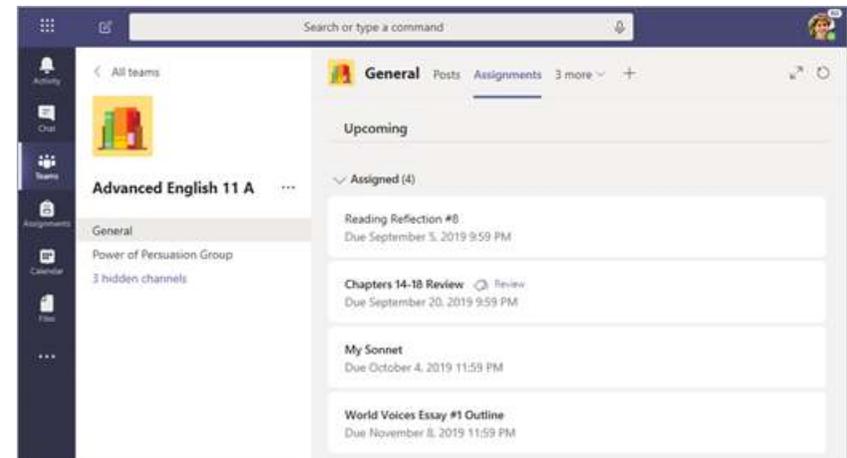
How is my child's communication and activity monitored in Teams?

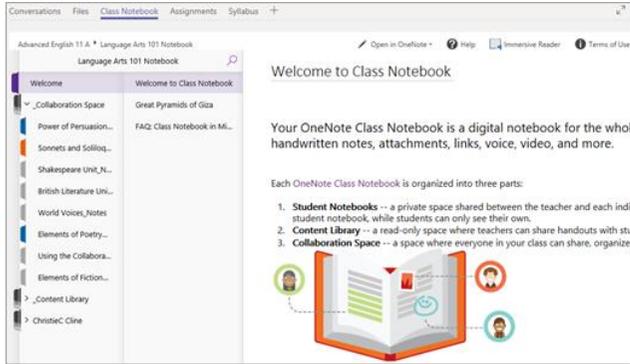
Since Teams for Education is designed to serve as a digital classroom hub, it features many ways to support teachers in classroom management. Teachers can mute students who may add distracting or inappropriate messages to group discussions, and they can delete those unproductive messages entirely.

As a communication platform with specific features to support teaching and learning, Teams is a great opportunity for students to build and practice digital citizenship alongside their academic learning.

Is Teams simply a chat app, or can my child study, work, and complete assessments there as well?

With the Assignments app built right into Teams, your child can see work his/her teachers have assigned, submit that work, and see the grades and feedback.



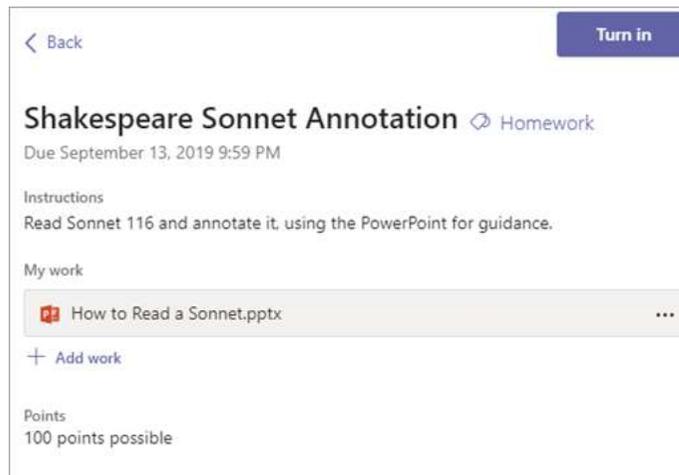
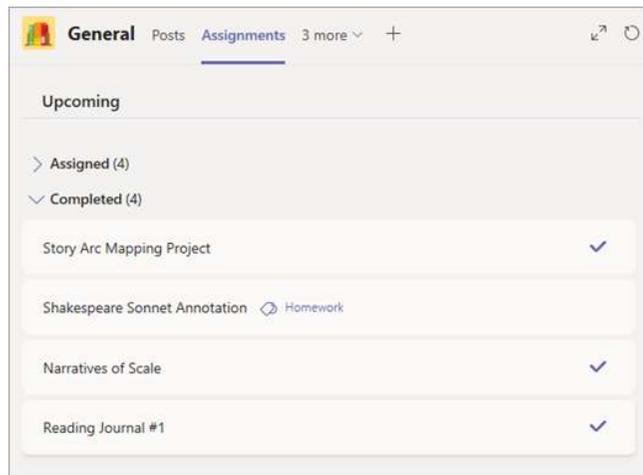


For other ongoing work, if activated by the teacher, every class team has a Class Notebook, where your child has their own private notebook space to take notes, reference resources, and even practice math equations!

Students can find both Assignments and Class Notebook as tabs in the General channel of each of their class teams.

How does my child turn in assignments using Teams? Can he/she check his/her grades in Teams?

Students can turn in their assignments by navigating to the Assignments tab in the General channel of their class team, then selecting an assignment. They can attach any appropriate work and select Turn in. [Read more](#) about keeping track of and turning in assignments.



Due date	Assignment	Status	Points
Jan 21	Take Home Waves Quiz	Viewed	/30
Jan 13	Watch Waves and Frictio...	Returned	5/5
Jan 9	Essay on space theory film	Returned	28/30
Jan 7	Submit your project prog...	Returned	33/40
Jan 6	Create a study guide for ...	Returned	17/20
Dec 20, 2019	Begin EM Waves project	Returned	39/30 <i>Extra credit!</i>
Dec 19, 2019	Review of Wave introduct...	Returned	26/30
Dec 19, 2019	Complete Wave Frequency	Returned	16/20

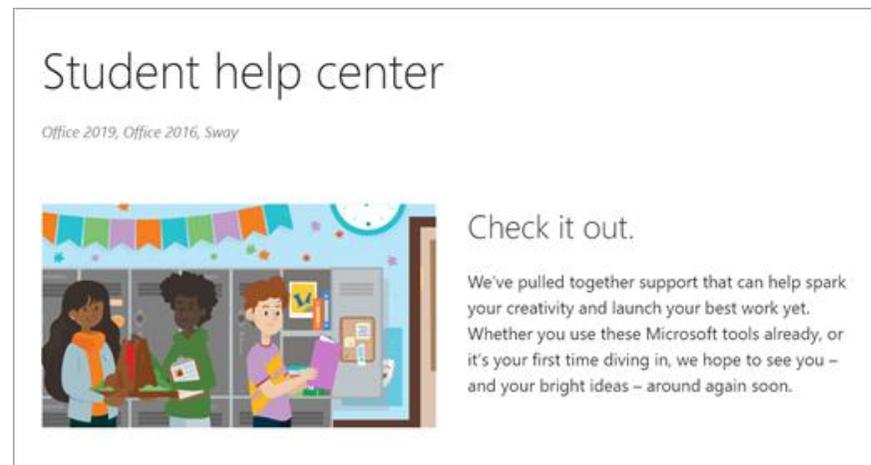
Students can see grades for their assignments, too! In the same General channel where they'll find their Assignments and other essential tabs, your student can select Grades to see their points on past work. [Read more](#) about how students can navigate their grades.

Where can my child access help on how to best use Microsoft Education tools?

Students have a [help center](#) made just for them! From covering the basics of using Teams all the way to project ideas, this [student help center](#) is all about showing students how they can leverage Office 365 for their learning, engagement, and creativity.

Please also visit:

- [Remote learning with Office 365 for students](#)
- general help [Microsoft Teams help & learning](#).



The image shows a banner for the 'Student help center'. The title 'Student help center' is at the top in a large, grey font. Below it, in a smaller font, are the words 'Office 2019, Office 2016, Sway'. The main part of the banner features an illustration of three diverse students (two girls and one boy) standing in a school hallway, looking at a laptop. To the right of the illustration, the text reads: 'Check it out. We've pulled together support that can help spark your creativity and launch your best work yet. Whether you use these Microsoft tools already, or it's your first time diving in, we hope to see you – and your bright ideas – around again soon.'