

20th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you know at the end of today we will be closed for the vast majority of our students until the government decides that schools should reopen. The government has published a useful FAQ document to support parents during this time:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

I would like to thank you for your support and understanding over the last few weeks as we have responded to the emerging Coronavirus situation. I know that for many parents the closure of our school will be a blow and will add to the challenges we are facing. However, we will continue to support you as much as we can in the coming weeks to ensure that your child's education does not suffer even if they will not be able to attend school.

During the last few weeks, we have been preparing for the school's possible closure and I would like to outline how we plan to support you and your child during this period of school closure and if they are not in school.

Today your child will have received a brief assembly demonstrating how to download and use Microsoft Teams and Email Outlook. The presentation used will be accessible via the Academy website along with parent guides from Monday 23rd March.

From Monday students and parents will be able to access learning materials via SMHW and student emails. You should have received a letter during this week outlining login and passwords for these. Attached is the online digital timetable for students to follow during the school closure.

Later in the week we expect to start providing "live lesson" experiences via Microsoft Teams. Staff will continue to provide learning material and video tutorials. If you do not have printing provisions at home then copies will be available for collection from the Academy Reception. Days and times for these collections will be communicated.

We will be in regular contact with you to advise you on what is available for students and how they can interact with their learning. Where appropriate we will also be providing opportunities for students to have their work assessed and receive feedback.

In addition, this is clearly a national effort and we understand that the BBC will be looking to support parents by providing additional educational content:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/latestnews/2020/bbc-keeping-nation-informed-educated-entertained>.

The Online Digital Timetable will incorporate some school work but also other activities to give students a structure for their day and the security of knowing what we expect of them during this time. It is important to remember that we do not know how long schools will be closed for and it is important that children establish a purposeful routine from the outset.



The government has also been clear about the need for us all to maintain social distancing to reduce the transmission of Coronavirus. This will be important whilst the schools are closed because young people will naturally want to interact. In summary we need to remind our children that they should:

- Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include high temperature and/or new and continuous cough
- Avoid non-essential use of public transport.
- Avoid large gatherings and gatherings in smaller public spaces.
- Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media

Full guidance on social distancing can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our staff who have worked incredibly hard to maintain the best possible provision for students in very challenging circumstances over the last few weeks. I know how committed each and every one of them is to doing their very best to ensure that all our students are able to access the best possible support and learning materials in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Simon Smith
Principal