

19 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As you know, we are all facing extraordinary challenges at this time and the situation is placing pressure on all parts of society. Our staff have been doing all they can to keep our school open since this crisis began and I would like to pay tribute to their remarkable commitment. They have been extraordinary and we will continue to play our part over the coming weeks.

As you may be aware, the Government made several very important decisions yesterday evening (18 March) about schools. There will be further detail to follow but I wanted to ensure you had as much information as possible as early as possible.

The first is that it has advised schools in England to close, except for certain groups of children, from this Friday afternoon (21 March) onwards as a further measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. No date has been set for when schools will re-open for all students.

From Monday, the school will continue to be open for the following groups of students:

- Children whose parents are frontline workers – the Government has said these would include NHS staff, police and supermarket delivery drivers. However, others will be in this category and we expect to hear more from the Government on this in the coming days.
- Those classed as what the Secretary of State described as “vulnerable children”. These could be those who have a social worker and those with EHCPs.

For students in these groups, we have also been asked to remain open through the Easter holidays and we will do our best to achieve this. From Monday 24 March and through this period, our school will provide care for these children.

As soon as I have more information on the above groups, I will share it with you and will then ask for parents/carers who fall within this remit and are accepting this provision to contact the school.

Children who do not fall into the groups listed above should remain at home with appropriate care.

Today (Thursday 19 March) and tomorrow (Friday 20 March), the school will remain open for all year groups and children can continue to come to school as normal.

The second key announcement is that tests and exams will not take place this summer. For children and young people, who have worked so hard to prepare for their SATs, GCSEs or A levels, this may be upsetting, and we sympathise with them. At the same time, we understand the decision the Government has made and we are reassured that children's grades in GCSEs and A levels will be awarded on the basis of moderated assessment, in conjunction with the exam boards and Ofqual. This means that the hard work students have done will be rewarded. It may not feel quite the same, and nor is it, but they will receive grades that will progress them to the next stage of their lives.

During the closure period, we will provide home learning resources for your child: we will be uploading resources that can be accessed from home on to our school website. These can be found under our curriculum tab, then in the Learning from home resources tab. Each year group will have their own page. We will begin to upload resources from Monday onwards. If you are unable to access these resources from home, then please let the school know via the school office, and we will endeavour to find a solution.

In the meantime, I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank you wholeheartedly for your understanding and ongoing support in helping us to manage this unprecedented situation.

Yours sincerely

Cormac Murphy
Headteacher