

5 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

School Closures

As you will have heard, the Prime Minister announced late yesterday that schools will close immediately as part of the measures put in place to control the spread of COVID-19. It has been reported that this will be in place until February half-term. Should this change, we will of course let you know.

The Prime Minister also announced that “not all exams” would go ahead as normal this year and that there would be alternative arrangements. He said the Government would set out further details on this at a later date. We will update parents and students due to take exams this year as soon as we have more information.

External examinations scheduled for January will still go ahead and we will be in touch with you regarding the arrangements for these as soon as we have further clarification.

Provision for vulnerable children and children of key workers

If both you and your partner are key workers, or if your child is classed as vulnerable and is unable to remain at home, your child will be able to attend school and they will access the remote learning at a computer the same as the children who are accessing this at home.

If you are wanting your child to access key worker and vulnerable provision you should have already applied for this and they should attend full time.

Please note this provision is intended to offer support to families only when both parents need to leave the family home to attend work and there is no alternative childcare available. You may be required to provide evidence of your employment.

Safety measures

As you know, we have worked incredibly hard since the start of the pandemic in March to keep our school as safe as possible, and I would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the safety measures in place at our school:

- All students and staff must wear a face covering in communal areas, unless exempt;
- Everyone is expected to remain in their allocated bubbles and maintain social distancing;
- Students are encouraged to wash their hands regularly throughout the day.

Please note we are trying to work with windows open in classrooms for ventilation. As the cold days have returned, and with the need for ventilation in mind, pupils may need a few more layers of clothing. Key worker and vulnerable students who are attending school do not have to wear uniform but they must be dressed appropriately. However, it is important to note that once school resumes as normal, ALL students will be required to wear full uniform. Therefore, uniforms should not be disregarded at this time.

Online learning

High-quality remote learning will be provided for students who are accessing from home. This will be in the form of live lessons on Google Meet but on occasions where this is not possible, work will be provided on Google Classroom. **Live lessons** will provide a more interactive experience meaning they will have more opportunity to engage with their peers and teachers in a 'virtual classroom'.

Our Tutors, Learning Managers and subjects teachers will be available to support our students whilst learning from home.

Students are expected to complete **all** work set by teachers and to attend **all** scheduled live lessons. We know that this places pressure on you at a difficult time but your support in helping your child engage with remote learning as much as possible is so important in keeping them up to date with their learning and we are very grateful for it. Students are expected to follow their normal timetable.

We expect that any revised arrangements for exams will be evidence-based and it is important that we continue to follow specifications and schemes of work. Therefore, it is **essential for all students to continue to work hard as always**.

Encourage your child to use their break, lunch and core PE lessons to take **regular breaks away from the screen** to support their own well-being and mental health.

We will continue to stay in touch with you throughout this time and will update you on any major announcements as they happen. However, do get in touch if you need any further information, or if you require any support relating to these new arrangements. Email addresses for specific members of staff can be found via our website www.bydales.outwood.com/contact, under 'Staff Key Contacts'.

I would like to thank you for your support. I know these are difficult times but I am confident that we will continue to make a difference to your child's education together, despite the lockdown restrictions imposed on us.

Yours faithfully



Seana Rice
Principal