

19 March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer,

Coronavirus update – school closure to most pupils

Following on from my last update, I'm writing to let you know that **we have now been instructed to close the school to almost all children after this Friday until further notice.**

As advised by the government, we will do all we can to stay open for the children of key workers (e.g. NHS staff, police, others in frontline services) and children with certain needs.

We are waiting for the government to publish more information on what this means, but it would help us in the meantime if you could let us know if you think your child may fall into one of these categories. If you are a key worker and need your child to have access to educational provision we ask that you contact us immediately. It would be most helpful to know today but at the very latest by 10.00 am tomorrow morning. Please either telephone school on 01753 520473 or email us on enquiries@beechwood.slough.sch.uk. Only those children/young people who have been registered with us by their parents and who we have confirmed are key worker children will be permitted to attend school next week.

In addition, we will be contacting the families of students who are in the other category described by the Secretary of State to confirm parental intention and wishes. These phone calls will take place over today and tomorrow and, again, only those children who are registered with us as needing to be present in school next week will be permitted to attend. If any person's circumstances changes, then this needs to be communicated to us. For safeguarding reasons, and in terms of health and safety, students can not simply report to school. Those attending over the forthcoming weeks need to be clearly identified, agreed and registered with us. I know you will all appreciate the reason for this and of course the circumstances that have led to this unprecedented and difficult situation.

All of our other young people will need to stay at home, so we ask that you do not send your child into school from Monday onwards.

Please note that this is a national closure – as you may have heard in the news – so while it is a challenging situation, we are not alone. We will re-open fully as soon as we can and will let you know when this is by emailing you, sending a text and placing this information on our website.

What we'll continue doing while your child is at home

Your child's learning is of course very important to us, so we'll continue to help your child to learn. I shared information on this in the weekly bulletin home but summarise again the expectations.

- Young people should not be out and about. They are not on holiday. They need to appreciate that this is a national crisis and school closure for most has been actioned in order to reduce the spread of a virus which can be fatal for some.
- Every day, students should be engaged in continuing their learning. Broadly speaking, they should aim to follow their regular timetable – ie: they should spend time working on the subjects that would usually have each day of the week. Practical subjects such as PE necessitate a slightly different approach. It is the case, however, that young people should also be taking exercise and they should factor this into their daily routine.

- Members of staff are uploading work on to our Google classrooms and will continue to do so. They will provide advice and guidance as appropriate and when possible. For those young people who do not have internet/IT access at home, we have prepared paper copies and these will be given to students tomorrow or posted home if the students are not currently present in school. We do not know how long school will be closed to the vast majority of our young people but we intend to continue setting work/home learning tasks and trust that there will be no circumstance that will prevent this. If any circumstances alter, we will let you know as soon as possible.

If your child usually receives free school meals we will also be in touch with more information about how this is to be managed with support from a scheme that the government has just announced. We are awaiting detail on this.

Cancelled Examinations

We fully appreciate what a really difficult situation our public examination students find themselves in. We know how upsetting this is for them. We are awaiting further information from the Secretary of State and the Examinations' Authority and I will be communicating separately with all our Year 11, Year 12 and Year 13 young people and their families

I have shared as much as I can at present but will continue to update you with developing news. I fully understand that this latest news will have a significant impact on you and your family and it is far from ideal. If you need to speak with me/if you need any advice or guidance please do not hesitate to be in contact.

Finally, I would like to repeat the advice we have been giving to our young people. Taking personal responsibility in ensuring that we remain as well as possible and do not pass on the virus is critical. Social distancing is essential. This means not continuing with usual social interactions and being in public places together unless it is absolutely necessary – ie: to get essential supplies. Our young people have also been repeatedly told about how absolutely critical it is to very regularly wash their hands and wash thoroughly. If they manifest symptoms they must self-isolate and so should their families. If there is any concern about health then advice is available from the NHS – the best source of information initially is the [NHS 111 online website](#).

Thank you again for your continued support, I wish you and your families well.

Very best wishes.



Kathleen M Higgins
Executive Headteacher