

17th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

COVID-19 Planning & Partial School Closures

Following revised guidance from the Government announced yesterday afternoon, we are now escalating our response to the current situation.

The up to date advice can now be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

With regards to partial closing of the school, I thought it would be helpful to set out our plans. It is important to emphasise that it remains the firm principle of all headteachers to keep schools open and we will do this until such a time where it is not operationally possible or that we are instructed otherwise by Public Health England. We are proactively planning together to keep our schools open and this includes agreeing partial closing protocols.

Partial closing is due to a critical number of staff who are no longer available to work. By partially closing the school to specific year groups over time we are better placed to keep open despite significant disruption. Ordinarily partial closure means schools being closed indefinitely to a specific key stage over a fixed period of time. In this circumstance we are clear that prolonged absence from school for students is not wise and therefore our plan is to rotate the partial closure so that different year groups only miss one day, rather than consecutive days.

Therefore, we will be partially closed this week for the following year groups:

Wednesday 18th March School closed to **Year 9**

Thursday 19th March School closed to **Year 8**

Friday 20th March School closed to **Year 10**

Given that some staff are self-isolating for 14 days due to a family member displaying symptoms, I know that this problem will persist. Therefore I expect we will need to continue with partial closures next week. I will communicate plans for next week as soon as possible.

By rotating the year groups to be absent for just one day we hope that students are not at home over a long period. Other secondary schools will rotate their year groups in their partial closing so that we can encourage social distancing of the same aged students. As you will see, lessons are prioritised to continue for Year 11 in preparation for their public exams, and for Year 7 due to their age. During partial closure work will be set for the affected year group. Regrettably it will not be possible to set work to be completed at home for individual self-isolation. Students should access general resources on the Student Shared drive or Show My Homework.

If you work in the health, education, childcare or emergency services sectors and you require our support with your children so that you can attend work, your child can still attend school if their year group is not attending school that day. If this pertains to you please let my PA know in advance so that I can assess the situation and plan to make suitable cover in school.

We will also be suspending all non-essential activities – therefore from tomorrow, Wednesday 18th March, **all after school clubs will be cancelled until further notice.**

It is highly likely that the upcoming trip to see 'An Inspector Calls' will be cancelled – we will confirm as soon as we know for definite.

Thank you for your on-going support and understanding during this unprecedented period.

We will continue to prioritise the health and welfare of our students and our staff whilst being mindful of our ambition to maintain education provision.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Luhman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mrs J. Luhman
Headteacher