

23rd March 2020

Dear Parent / Carer

As you know, staff in our schools have put in place arrangements for virtual learning which will facilitate your children's continued education. Please support us by ensuring your children do make the most of this service: as you are all too aware, schools may not be able to re-open for some time, so making sure students keep up a structured approach and apply themselves to their studies in the way they would at school is essential, not only in terms of their education but also with regard to their wellbeing and good mental health.

Meanwhile, our schools will be accommodating key workers' children who cannot safely be left at home without supervision. We'll also be welcoming vulnerable children and those in the other categories highlighted by the government. We are very happy to undertake this responsibility but I would remind you of the following:

- in the interests of safety, we must have the information requested for return by Friday 20th March – if you are a key worker and your child is of an age to need supervision whilst you are at work and haven't already sent in the form, please do so, as a matter of urgency
- if you are a key worker who is not currently in need of a place at school but your circumstances change and your child will need supervision, please contact the school and submit the information needed, before your child returns
- this is not a "drop-in" service - we take very seriously our duty of care and students who are staying at home during the period of closure should not come to school unless they have been asked to do so by a member of staff
- that our staff are also key workers, many of them with children and other dependents themselves
- that we don't have all the answers yet about the weeks and months to come but our schools will keep you updated when they can
- that the primary purpose of school closure is to limit the spread of the infection; therefore the majority of our staff will be working from home. We should not and cannot accept children who should be self-isolating and not mixing with their peers and teachers

I know what many of you have sent very appreciative and supportive messages to the schools. We also know that infection is spreading rapidly in many areas and that there is an atmosphere of fear, not least as the result of rumour and speculation, but this virus has highlighted that we are all inter-connected and we have to support each other, even at a distance, not least by following the guidance we are given.

Kind regards

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