

16<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent

**Re: Remote learning in the event of school closure**

Given the current situation with coronavirus there is a significant risk of school closure in the future. As such we are currently gathering as much information as possible in the form of study packs, worksheets, exam past papers, revision and consolidation website addresses for our school website so all students have meaningful work to do should we close. As the picture is constantly developing we do not know what will happen with external exams moving forward, as such we will have to assume that they will happen according to the exam timetable and prepare the students as fully as we can whether we are open or closed on the lead up to this period. I would urge your son or daughter to take a balanced approach to this and whilst students should try to work hard whether at home or at school please be aware that these are exceptional times and nobody, including the exam boards, will expect students to perform to the same standards as previous years should we be forced to close for a lengthy period of time.

Given attempting to substitute the normal teaching experience will be a significant challenge and will very much rely on your son or daughter's commitment to study independently, particularly in what may be a very busy home setting. We would ask that you do what you can to ensure your son or daughter engages in whatever learning we can offer through our website links or other direct websites. It is encouraging that a number of educational companies are offering their resources free of charge in order to support learning in these challenging times and we would ask you encourage your child to make the best use of their time away from school.

**Years 11 and 13 and students in year 12 with external exams**

We realise that very many of the students particularly in years 11, 12 and 13 will be anxious about their future exams and keen to take every opportunity that may be available. We are currently trialling ways in which teachers can communicate with their exam classes directly using the student's school email address and Office 365. This would mean we could set up direct links to all our classes and send documents and teaching advice as necessary. There is also the scope to use Microsoft Teams to deliver lessons using a webcam or otherwise in order that students with the appropriate technology can learn as effectively as they can under the circumstances.

Clearly this would be a new way of working for almost all of us and we would have a great deal of work and learning to do in the set up and training of teachers and students in new systems.

It is for this reason that in the event of school closure we will initially prioritise our students in the final year of their KS4/5 studies. As such from today we are ensuring your son or daughter has received sufficient training to access their school emails as well as whatever online support we can offer. We will try where we can to keep lessons at their normal timetabled time. This will help everyone try to build as much structure as we can through the coming days. Your child has been given a paper copy of their timetable together with a calendar of the weeks up to the end of the year. Please ensure your child checks their school email at 9am & 1pm daily for any messages or work to complete.

Year 11 have just completed their 2<sup>nd</sup> set of mock exams and we will aim to post or email their monitoring out to you next week, should this still be possible. At the moment year 13 are doing mock exams but should we need to close then we will have the papers ready to give out to students so that they can be done at home. Again if this is the case I would ask for your support in trying to ensure a quiet place where they can be done in exam like conditions. If this is the case we will arrange for the mark schemes to be sent or emailed out so that students can self-mark their papers.

**Years 7-10**

As soon as we have got to grips with the unseen issues which remote learning will undoubtedly bring in years 11, 12 and 13 we will start to turn our focus to the other years. As mentioned previously there is a large amount of material on our website that with the right application will ensure your child keeps up with their learning as best as they can through this period. I would also highly recommend allocating time to reading books either paper or online as the research evidence clearly shows this is extremely worthwhile to your child's overall progress.

We are aware that some students may not have the necessary equipment or may face issues with the technology. Whilst we cannot guarantee we will be able to solve any such issues, we will do our best to support every child's learning as best we can through this challenging period.

At the moment we know as much as the news coverage but as we are aware that the picture can change at short notice we are doing what we can to prepare for any potential short or long term closure. You will find help sheets on our website that will help your child set themselves up for this

Please contact the school if you have any questions and we will do our best to answer them.

With every best wish for the days ahead,

Des Coyle  
Deputy Headteacher