



18<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

### **Coronavirus Update 5**

By now you will surely all know of the announcement made this afternoon: all schools across England will cease normal working at the end of Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> March. That much is clear, but many implications of the announcement have yet to be unravelled. Many of you will have questions arising from what you heard the Prime Minister say. So do I, for I write this evening without having received any more information than you. All that I can do tonight is to give you an interim report.

#### **Those who will continue to attend school**

From Monday the school remains open to certain groups of students. These are:

- those whose parents are employed in essential services
- those with a designated social worker
- those with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

At some point tomorrow there will be a form available on e-Praise allowing you to register your son or daughter if you work in an essential service. Please make use of this: we are aware of students with a social worker or an EHCP but do not have a record of parental occupations. (I am hoping that during tomorrow I shall receive more detail as to what the government considers is an essential service.)

All students in these three categories may continue to attend during normal school hours. There will be some catering on site; the form of it will depend partly on the numbers concerned.

We shall provide facilities for the students to work on the same programmes and assignments as their colleagues who are studying at home. Staff will be on hand to support them.

#### **Students in Years 11 and 13**

We have been told that the GCSE and A-level exams this summer will not take place. Some other form of assessment will replace them but at the moment we do not know what.

Until we do, staff will continue to provide appropriate work and support through e-Praise and students' personal email accounts.

I have to say that I sympathise wholeheartedly with the students (and their families) who have been investing in these exams over a good many months. I hope very much that the government will devise a way of recognising their commitment.

#### **Other students not attending school**

We will do all that we can to make this period of disruption a time of opportunity. I trust that you will support us in this, for distance learning does create its own challenges.

Our part will be as follows. The work set will shadow the normal school timetable. It will be available on e-Praise and/or sent directly to individual students through their school email accounts. There will be instructions as to how assignments or results can be sent back to the school electronically. Staff will, as I have explained previously, respond to questions which are sent to them.



### **Vouchers in place free school meals**

There is to be a national scheme, but currently I do not know anything about how it will operate.

### **Finally**

I close this letter with the hope that there will be another one tomorrow. I trust that by then I shall be able to answer some more of the questions which are in all of our minds.

Meanwhile, please do not forget to register your work in an essential service when the form is available tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,

*N. J. Waters*

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