

5 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

After the really positive first term we had under the circumstances, I didn't really think I would be writing an email to you so early this term about a national lockdown.

As you know the government have told us that "the single most important action we can all take is to stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives". For our school this means that we will remain open only for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers. **All other children will learn remotely until at least February half term.**

The government also said that in the circumstances, they do not think it is possible for all exams in the summer to go ahead as planned. They will accordingly be working with Ofqual to consult rapidly to put in place alternative arrangements that will allow students to progress fairly. We will of course let you know when anything further is announced.

Remote learning

Following the announcement that school will remain closed to most students until at least February half term, we just wanted to remind you what you and your child can expect in terms of remote learning.

- All work will continue to be set via Microsoft Teams in advance of timetabled lessons. Work should include a narrated powerpoint for students to work through.
- Students will be expected to work to their school timetable as far as is possible.
- Lessons will begin at 8.55am as normal and all resources will be shared on Teams.
- During their timetabled lesson times, teachers will lead the lesson via the Teams Chat function wherever possible so students should log into Teams and join the lesson they have on their timetable. Where teachers are unable to lead the lesson 'live' they will still provide work, usually including a narrated PowerPoint, for students to work through
- Form tutors will lead a minimum of one tutor session per week and they will let their form class know when this will be. If tutors are able to do more than that, they will. Tutors will also begin to make tutor phone calls over the coming weeks to check in with your child by phone and see how they are coping; more information will follow about this
- If students are unable to follow their timetable at the designated times for any reason, for example due to shared IT, they will still be able to access the work in Teams and should aim to complete some work for every lesson they would have had that day
- Students should share their work with their teachers electronically where possible.
- Not all work will be marked, just as it would not if they were in school, however teachers will respond to work submitted. In addition, across the half term there will be clearly identified pieces of work in each subject that will receive more formal feedback for students to respond to. The frequency of this will depend on the contact time for that particular subject.
- If your child is unable to complete work electronically, please let us know
- We want to reassure you that, while your child is engaging in remote learning, their teachers and tutors will be available to support them. We are confident that they will enjoy a high-quality remote learning experience.

Vulnerable students and children of critical workers

The Government have said that vulnerable students and children of critical workers can attend school.

If any vulnerable students and children of critical workers have no other alternative and need to attend school please send an email to attendancerequests@gshs.org.uk by with 'Critical Worker/Vulnerable student' in the subject heading, stating which days you require your child to attend school. Students who are in school will be supervised to complete their remote learning but will NOT be in normal lessons.

Vulnerable children include those with education, health and care (EHC) plans and those who have a social worker (including children in need, children who have a child protection plan and those who are looked after by the local authority). Critical workers are those in the following critical sectors: Health & Social Care i.e. NHS staff, care workers and social workers; Education & Child Care i.e. nursery and teaching staff; Key Public Services i.e. justice system, religious staff, journalists; Local and National Government; Food & other necessary goods i.e. those involved in production, distribution, sale and delivery of food and hygiene goods; Public Safety & National Security i.e. Emergency services, prison; Transport i.e. rail, road and freight transport; Utilities, Communication & Financial services i.e. postal workers, banks, building societies, waste disposal.

Many parents working in these sectors may be able to ensure their child is kept at home. This is an offer to parents and carers and there is no requirement for parents and carers to send their children to school if they do not need to do so. **You only need to let us know if your child absolutely needs to attend school because they are vulnerable and/or you are a critical worker.**

With very best wishes

Mr Wilkinson