

19th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you know, we are all facing extraordinary challenges at this time and the situation is placing pressure on all parts of society. Our staff have been doing all they can to keep our school open, or partially open, since this crisis began and I would like to pay tribute to their remarkable commitment. They have been extraordinary and we will continue to play our part over the coming weeks.

As you may be aware, the Government made several very important decisions yesterday evening (18th March) about schools. There will be further detail to follow but I wanted to ensure you had as much information as possible as early as possible.

The first is that it has advised schools in England to close, except for certain groups of children, from this Friday afternoon (20th March) onwards as a further measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. No date has been set for when schools will re-open for all students.

From Monday, the school will continue to be open for the following groups of students:

- Children whose parents are frontline workers – the Government has said these would include NHS staff, police and supermarket delivery drivers. However, others will be in this category and we expect to hear more from the Government on this in the coming days
- Those classed as what the Secretary of State described as “vulnerable children”. These could be those who have a social worker and those with EHCPs

For students in these groups, we have also been asked to try to remain open through the Easter holidays and we will do our best to achieve this. From Monday 23 March and through this period, our school will provide care for these children.

As soon as I have more information on the above groups, I will share it with you and will then ask for parents/carers who fall within this remit and are accepting this provision to contact the school.

I hope you will recognise the difficult times schools and teachers now face. We are called on to provide emergency childcare at a time when many teachers’ first thought will be to remain with their families and children. It is essential that we will all pull together to support our emergency services and key workers and you can do this by minimising your call on our limited reserves. Therefore, children who do not fall into the groups listed above should remain at home with appropriate care. There may also be partners who work from home or other non-elderly family members who could provide childcare support. I must stress schools are closed for public health reasons and this childcare is an emergency measure only. Please support our staff and each other by respecting the need for key workers to have access to appropriate childcare at this time.

The second key announcement is that tests and exams will not take place this summer. For children and young people, who have worked so hard to prepare for their SATs, GCSEs or A levels, this may be upsetting, and we sympathise with them. At the same time, we understand the decision the Government has made and we are reassured that children’s grades in GCSEs and A levels will be awarded on the basis of moderated assessment, in conjunction with the exam boards and Ofqual. This means that the hard work students have done will be rewarded.

...Changing lives

It may not feel quite the same, and nor is it, but they will receive grades that will progress them to the next stage of their lives.

In the meantime, I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank you wholeheartedly for your understanding and ongoing support in helping us to manage this unprecedented situation.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'C. Davenport'.

Miss Davenport
Head of Academy
Weelsby Academy