

18<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

**Coronavirus update – school closure to most pupils**

Further to my last update, I am now writing to confirm that **we have now been instructed to close the school to the majority of students from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March until further notice.**

As advised by the government, we intend to stay open for the children of key workers (for example NHS staff, police and others in frontline services) and children with certain specific needs.

The government will be publishing more information about what this means in the morning, but thank you to the majority of parents and carers who have already responded to our survey requesting information in preparation for the next phase of our response to this pandemic.

Once we have further clarification, we will make contact again with the parents/carers to whom the guidance applies. **In the meantime I would be very grateful if parents refrained from phoning the school to request further information, as this will simply hinder the speed at which we can make these crucial decisions.** I fully appreciate that this is a very anxious time for everyone, but please be assured that we will communicate everything as soon as we possibly can.

Please note that this is a national closure, so although this is a very challenging situation, we are not alone. We will re-open to all students as soon as possible, as advised by the government and medical professionals.

As previously communicated, **please ensure that your child checks their school email address regularly.** All teachers will set work and, as far as possible, be available on-line for their timetabled lessons. However, please bear in mind that some members of staff will be supervising those students who are in school, therefore will not always be available for direct or instant contact. They will also have their own personal circumstances to contend with, including childcare, to please try to be patient.

We will be using a variety of platforms, but primarily Microsoft Teams. Other resources will also be encouraged, such as MyMaths, Mathswatch and GCSEPod. All of these should be accessed via the school's portal:

<https://uwsnyorkssch.sharepoint.com/SitePages/Home.aspx>

We will keep you informed as we receive more information, via the school website [www.uws.n-yorks.sch.uk](http://www.uws.n-yorks.sch.uk) and twitter @upperwharfedale, as well as via email. If you do not yet follow us on twitter, I urge you to do so.

If your child usually receives free school meals, we will also be in touch with more information about how we will continue to provide this, with support from a scheme that the government has just announced. Again, once we have clarification, we will inform those concerned.

Please note that, during this time, we will not be able to continue with any breakfast, lunch or after school clubs, interventions or after school events. The planned Easter revision sessions will, of course, not be taking place.

For Year 11 students and families, this will be a particularly anxious time. We now know that GCSE exams will not take place in their current form and we await further information regarding how grades will be awarded. Again, please be assured that we will disseminate any information we have as soon as possible.

**We cannot underestimate the effects of this on our children's education, but I urge everyone to maintain a sense of perspective wherever possible. Never in our lifetime have we experienced an international pandemic such as this, and I hope we never will again. We all must prioritise the health and wellbeing of our families, friends, loved ones and indeed everyone in our local and wider community. We will get through this in true Yorkshire spirit and I send every one of you my very best wishes. I have always maintained that education is one of the most important things in life, but it takes second place in these circumstances. Please take care of each other and the rest will take care of itself.**

If you want to get in touch to share any concerns, please don't hesitate to do so via the school email address [admin@uws.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:admin@uws.n-yorks.sch.uk) , or to me directly [ataylor@uws.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:ataylor@uws.n-yorks.sch.uk)

Remember: if you or your child feels ill and you want to know what to do next, please use [NHS 111 online](#). For those students who do attend school next week, the current guidance remains regarding isolation. **Please ensure that there is an emergency plan in place to collect your child should they display any symptoms and need to be collected from school.**

Thank you again for your continued support. This is a very special community and I have no doubt that we will resolve this together, even though it will take time. I will be in touch with more information when I can.

Yours faithfully



Andrew Taylor  
Headteacher

Thursday, 19 March 2020