

17 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Update – 17/3/2020**

#### **Current Situation**

You will be aware that recent changes to Government advice on self-isolation have resulted in a significant reduction in staff available to attend school, impacting on a range of services, including teaching. It is also the case that more of you have decided to keep your children at home. This presents a unique set of challenges when we consider our educational priorities and best next steps.

I believe that there is now an inevitability that we will move to a school shut-down and virtual learning offering. I will make a decision on the timing of this switch at a meeting I will hold with the College Leadership Team tomorrow morning. The decision will be based on what best serves the educational interests and safety of the pupils under our care.

In the meantime, I ask for your patience and understanding, whether your children are in the school or whether they are at home.

Where pupils are at home during the time that the school remains open:

1. The full virtual learning package cannot be put into operation because teachers are still in their classes teaching the children who are present. We are pleased by all it has to offer but the final testing phase is important to get right and we cannot run both models concurrently
2. Teachers who are able to come to school and teach lessons in person will try to upload lesson resources and homework to Firefly wherever possible
3. Teachers who are at home but able to work will upload lesson resources, tasks and homework to Firefly for their classes.
4. Teachers who are at home but unable to work will upload lesson resources, tasks and homework only when they are able to do so.

Please could I ask that you are mindful that this is an incredibly pressurised time for all staff, whether they are at home or at school. Whilst we must facilitate and respond to your communication with the school, I do hope you will appreciate that we are receiving a particularly high volume of parent emails at the moment. Please do bear with us if it takes a little longer than usual to respond to individual enquiries.

To reiterate that as soon as we do decide to close the school to pupils, the full virtual learning package will commence.

## **Year 12 Trial Tomorrow**

As stated in yesterday's update, I am immensely grateful to Year 12 for trialling our remote learning strategy tomorrow. They will have Periods 1-4 to run through Microsoft Teams. We will then host a series of virtual feedback sessions (again through Teams) during Tutor Time at 1430. They do not need to attend school in the afternoon.

## **Junior School Remote Learning**

In order to facilitate as many parents receiving the remote learning training as possible and to offer the opportunity to begin using Firefly, we have made the decision to offer this online only and therefore cancel the remote learning parent presentation after school tomorrow, Wednesday 18 March. Mr Murphy has created an interactive presentation for parents, which will be available to you by 1600 tomorrow to access in your child's year group resources folder (labelled 'Tutorials for parents'). In this folder, you will also find a letter from your child's Section Head outlining any section specific information. We ask that you take the time to watch the presentation at your earliest convenience to familiarise yourself with the daily routine/remote learning platforms and should you have any questions following this, please email [jsict@sdmail.org.uk](mailto:jsict@sdmail.org.uk). In addition to the presentation and Section Head letter, we will also include step-by-step guidance of how to access Firefly and Microsoft Teams to access resources, complete tasks and take part in interactive question and answer sessions. By the end of the day tomorrow, all Junior School pupils from Years 1-6 will have completed an ICT lesson where they have been given their own tutorial on how to access both platforms, so please do ask them to show you in order to embed their learning and understanding of the platforms even further.

## **Preparing your child for remote learning**

Mrs McLellan will be sending you documentation separate to this email that we hope will help in preparing you and your children for remote learning.

## **Public Health England Latest Update**

There are no updates further to yesterday's bulletin.

With continued thanks for your support during this more challenging time.

Yours sincerely



Mr N P Hewlett  
Headmaster