

19th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Coronavirus – School Closure

As you are undoubtedly aware, the Government has made the decision to close all schools from tomorrow afternoon.

I will be conducting special assemblies today and staff will be speaking to all students before school closes to try to reassure them and to explain the importance of following government guidelines and playing their part as responsible citizens during this difficult and uncertain period. We will also explain to them the importance of staying in a routine and in the habit of schoolwork and constructive activity.

We are all uncertain of how things will develop, but what we do know is that it will be challenging for families and unsettling for our children. School provides a level of consistency and routine that they will miss; I cannot underestimate the importance of keeping their bodies and minds active and engaged during this time.

Year 11 GCSEs and Year 13 A Levels

We will ensure year 11 and 13 have plenty of support over the next two days. The decision to cancel all exams will be a real blow to them and the uncertainty about how they will be “awarded what they need and deserve” will create stress and anxiety. Please reassure them that Headteachers will stop at nothing to ensure that they will be rewarded appropriately for their hard work and dedication. We will be talking to them about how to manage this situation and their feelings and the importance of feeling proud of how well they had prepared and practiced for the exams. I will inform you immediately of any news on this. Year 11 and 13 should continue to study but will not be preparing for exams. For many this period will lead into level 3 learning at 6th form, college, apprenticeship or University. They may, therefore, wish to focus their studies, skill development, research or wider educational interests on the area they are planning to focus on during this next stage of their education. They should also read some books! We are, as yet, unaware when schools will re-open and therefore cannot speculate about any arrangements in the summer term for these students.

Working from home

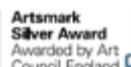
It is an expectation that all students will continue to work from home. Students have been told how to access the work that we have set for them. It will be available on the ‘quick links’ section of our website from the end of school on Friday, on a specially designed page at:

<https://www.wolverley.worcs.sch.uk/519/coronavirus-home-working>

AMBITION UNLIMITED

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Most work can be completed with basic stationery and paper or other resources found in the family home. Students will be offered paper and pens to take home free of charge today if they need them, however, it may be worth ensuring that you have got these basics for the longer term and before things possibly become constrained. The internet will very useful and for most tasks will provide a basis for background to their study. Please try to ensure access to the internet in your household is prioritised for your son/daughter so that they can have the very best experience whilst working at home. Teachers have provided links to useful websites for related content and have tried very hard to make the work interesting and engaging. Students have been reminded of the importance of making a note of their login details for the number of excellent online packages that the school subscribes to such as Hegarty Maths and Linguascope. There are also some suggestions for creative and practical tasks. At a time when families are potentially forced to be together in their homes, it may be worth considering working with your son or daughter or doing some of the tasks as a family. Please remember the value of reading. If you can encourage reading at this time it will contribute to improvements in literacy.

We have set work for 2 weeks in the first instance. There is a weekly task sheet for each year group and each subject. Please ask your son or daughter to keep copies of all the work that they do so that we can add it to folders and exercise books on their return. Work on the computer should also be saved carefully so that it can be easily retrieved and used in school when the we re-open.

Free school meals

The Government has announced a roll out of a voucher scheme. We are awaiting further details of this and any available provision from Monday as an interim. I will update you as soon as I have news.

Although school will be closed to most, our staff will be contactable by email, although their response time may be affected by any emerging difficulties and associated commitments to their personal family situation as the impact of the virus increases.

Provision for key workers' children or those in vulnerable groups

We are rapidly developing plans following the unexpected announcement last night from government regarding provision for vulnerable students and those of key workers. I will write to those parents and carers who this affects as soon as we have clarification of expectations and firm plans.

Wellbeing

Above all, try to keep safe and well. Please encourage them to up with their studies, learn new ways to research and keep to daily school routine in place as much as possible. It is also vitally important to eat well and keep up with regular exercise. The importance of exercise can never be under-estimated; it beats stress, combats anxiety and strengthens the immune system. More importantly make sure students get at least 8 hours of sleep!

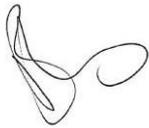
Should students feel anxious or the need to talk to someone the following websites may help:

- www.kooth.com
- <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>
- <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

Please stay safe and well and we look forward to having everyone back in school once we have the all clear.

Any important updates or changes from the school will be communicated using ParentMail and copies of all significant letters will be posted on the website.

Your sincerely



Bryn Thomas
Headteacher