

5 January 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

Following the Prime Minister's announcement last night I have to notify you of further changes to plans for the new term which supersede all previous correspondence.

Schools are now to be closed to all students other than those classified as vulnerable and children of critical workers. All other students will work at home on remote provision. The situation will be reviewed by the Government but at the moment we are advised this will be the situation up until at least February half term.

Mock examinations for Y11 and Y13 are postponed although vocational examinations such as BTEC will go ahead and students should arrive for their examination on the date and time originally scheduled. The situation around the summer external examinations is under review and we await confirmation from the Department for Education and Ofqual as to the exact nature of the final assessment process for Y11 and Y13 students.

Learning will commence for all students from Wednesday 6th January and students should follow the original timetables produced for this week which were sent out prior to the Christmas break. However, circumstances have altered since the timetable was issued and we have teachers who are parents of young children, currently attempting to balance childcare and/or organise provision for their own children. Therefore, please be aware that for the three days this week there may be a situation where a teacher is unable to deliver a scheduled live lesson. If this is the case then that class will either be merged with another group of similar prior attainment and the live lesson delivered by another teacher or the teacher will set a task rather than deliver the live lesson. This is a potential consequence of us working around the short notice of the Government decision on school closure and we will have more clarity on our staffing situation over the next couple of days.

On Thursday we will send out detailed information and guidance on our rationale and timetable for remote learning provision for all year groups for the five weeks leading up to February half term. In the meantime, I would ask you to ensure your child is prepared to engage with the timetable that has been issued from Wednesday 6th January through to the end of the school day on Friday 8th January. Due to the large demand for provision in school for vulnerable students and those whose parents are critical workers I need to reiterate that such provision is only available to those students who fulfil this criteria. As teachers will all be delivering full timetables we do not have the staffing to supervise excessive numbers of



students in school nor do we wish to exceed the permitted numbers as this increases the risk of potential transmission. We will send out separate information to all parents/carers who have requested provision in school for their child. We are extremely disappointed at the decision to close schools and the disruption this causes to students' learning and social interaction and to you as families in general. However, we understand that in the current climate such decisions are inevitable. We will endeavour to maintain frequent lines of communication with all our students and families throughout this period of school closure and wish you all well throughout these challenging times. You all remain in our thoughts and prayers.

Yours sincerely

Sean Pender
Head teacher