

6th January 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

Partial School Closure: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

The health, safety and welfare of our students, staff, families and the community are at the forefront of the decisions we make as a school. In light of the current public health emergency, it is with regret that we have had to make the decision to carry out an enforced partial closure to Year 9. At this moment in time, exceptional levels of staff absence means that we cannot safely accommodate all students in the Academy. **We have made the decision to close to Year 9 from Friday 7th January until Wednesday 12th January. This means year 9 students will not be in the Academy on Friday 7th nor Wednesday 12th and are expected to return on Thursday 13th.** Should staffing levels improve, and it becomes safe to do so, we will alert you that we are reopening to Year 9 sooner.

The Academy remains open as normal to all other year groups.

Home Learning

We have previously communicated with you to explain what the process will be for setting work for students during the enforced closure. Therefore, whilst at home, Google Classroom is the means by which teachers will set work for their classes. In order for parents/carers to support their children at home, we have created a [Home Learning webpage](http://homelearning.outwood.com) (homelearning.outwood.com) which provides you with guidance on how to access Google Classroom with your child. If your child has any issues regarding accessing their lessons, please do not hesitate to contact the Academy, either by phone or through the 'Contact us' page on the Academy website.

We have made amendments to our provision following previous partial closures and in an attempt to increase engagement remotely we have added a "live" element to the provision of lessons throughout the day. During these live sessions student engagement will be registered.

The vast majority of lessons will be provided in Google Classrooms but because of staff absence, it is possible that some lessons will not be recorded or live. In this case, a lot of additional work is also available to all students via:

- Sparx Maths <https://sparx.co.uk/>
- Oak National Academy <https://www.thenational.academy/>
- BBC Bitesize <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>
- <https://science.outwood.com/>
- <https://sites.google.com/outwood.com/maths/home>

All the lessons for the partial closure will be found in a Personalised Learning Google Document in the Year 9 Tutor Google Classroom which all students have been invited to. Students will be able to access their learning via a hyperlink to a recorded task, live link or resources on the Learning Summary.

Free School Meal Parcel

We have support available for families of students in receipt of free school meals in the form of a food parcel. Please let us know, by contacting the school via phone or the 'Contact us' page on the Academy website, if you would like to collect one of these. Food parcels will be made available to those that request them from Friday 7th January for collection from the Academy reception from 12.00 onwards.

Key worker/Vulnerable Student Provision

If you are a classed as a key worker or your child meets the vulnerable children definition according to the government list (**link to updated guidance below**) and you are unable to make alternative arrangements for your child, please send your child to school as normal and ask them to report to a member of staff at the gate:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

Face coverings

The Academy continues to communicate and act upon guidance provided from the local health protection team. Please therefore be reminded that all students should wear face coverings in communal areas and classrooms within the Academy. We will continue to maintain the daily systems of control in place in the Academy this term; additional hand sanitisation, forward facing seating in classrooms and separate year group break times. We appreciate your support in assisting with the safety measures for the entire Academy community and can continue to provide students and families with home testing kits to promote twice weekly testing. Should your child require more tests and does not know where to access these please ask them to speak to their form tutor or their learning manager.

As I'm sure you will understand, the decision to close the Academy to even one year group is something which we have not done lightly. Thank you for your understanding and support during this difficult time.

Yours faithfully



Mr W Pratt
Principal

