



5 January 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Coronavirus Update

I hope this finds you well in these challenging times. As you will be aware from last night's news, the proposed 'staggered return' to schooling has now been extended into a full lockdown and I am sure you, like us, are wrestling with the implications of this.

George Pindar School remains open for vulnerable children and the children of critical workers in Years 7 to 11. Please be aware that, in line with national guidance, we need to keep our school communities safe. Wherever possible, children should stay at home. In our communities, it is imperative that we keep transmission rates low and to do this, numbers of staff and children in schools need to be kept a minimum. Places for children of critical workers should only be taken up if absolutely necessary. Places will be prioritised for vulnerable children, who are expected to attend school full time.

Critical workers are defined as those working in:

- Health and social care
- Education and childcare
- Local and national government
- Food and other necessary goods
- Public safety and national security
- Transport and border
- Utilities, communication and financial services

We are operating two keyworker bubbles - one for Key Stage Three and one for Key Stage Four students. Students will be kept together in these bubbles and, once Lateral Flow Testing has commenced, will be invited to be tested regularly. A separate letter and consent form will be provided for this in due course.

Critical workers must book their place **by Thursday of the previous week**, in order to secure places for each week of the lockdown period. Should circumstances change for parents with regards to critical worker status, evidence must be provided to demonstrate this. A Google Form link will be circulated each Wednesday to facilitate this process.

Students who are in receipt of Free School Meals will be able to collect grab bags/hampers on a rota basis. We will contact families following discussions with our catering provider. The Government has made it clear that vouchers will not be provided during this lockdown and has asked schools to provide food packages for collection from school.

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Work will be provided throughout the lockdown period online using the Google Classroom platform, with paper-based work for the small number of students who have indicated that they do not have a device or where we have been unable to provide one as a school. Full instructions on how to access the online work can be found at: http://georgepindarschool.org/online_learning/ and teachers are available 'online' during the timetabled lesson for support with the tasks. In addition, some teachers are running 'live lessons' so please encourage your child to log on at the designated time to access this support. In line with Government guidance, our remote learning offer is now much more rigorous and formal and as such, we will be contacting parents or carers at the end of each week if students have not accessed online learning to find out if we can offer support.

It has been suggested by some parts of the media that exams are 'cancelled' for this year; however this has not been confirmed by the Department for Education. To that end, we are advising all Year 11 students to continue with all of their work and lessons as planned, including any vocational exams due to take place this week. As soon as we receive new guidance, I will update Year 11 students and families.

I appreciate that this is a difficult and challenging time for many families and send you all our best wishes for the weeks ahead. Please encourage your child to log on and work with teachers to enable progress to be made throughout this time.

Yours sincerely

LA Welsh

Lesley Welsh
Principal