

19 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Coronavirus (COVID-19): School Closure to all students from Monday 23rd March

Thank you for the positive responses we have received to my previous communication to you about our plans to be ready for closure. By now you will know the government has announced significant measures to help manage the spread of Coronavirus Covid-19 which as of 5.15pm on the 18th March included closing schools for the vast majority of students from the end of the school day on Friday 20th March.

Due to staff shortages a decision has been made to close to students in years 9 and 11 tomorrow Friday 20th March.

We will aim to remain open for years 7, 8 and 10, and the sixth form only tomorrow. I have already written to inform you of the plans we had begun to put in place for this eventuality and am pleased to report that the online learning has all been organised for your children.

The school will attempt to put on a form of educational provision for the few exceptional cases from Monday for the following students:

1. Children **in years 7 and 8** of Key Workers with no other form of childcare during the school closure (for example, medical, nursing and paramedic / ambulance staff, workers in Adult Social Care, social workers, health care assistants and administrators [in GP practices / clinics], registered childminders, nursery staff [PVI] fire and police service, and delivery drivers who cannot make other childcare arrangements) are to come to school for as long as we possibly can accommodate them. The local authority advice is that colleagues in these professions should show work identification where possible to confirm their eligibility for this. **Please indicate to us as soon as possible, and certainly by 12:30pm on Friday 20th March, if you are a Key Worker in this category. We will not be able to provide provision without this identification.**

Please click here to provide information online: [Parent Survey](#)

2. Children in all years who currently have EHC plans or are defined as vulnerable and are currently receiving support by Social Care. We will contact these parents/carers separately with further information as soon as we can.

The school will be planning the type and level of provision it is able to reasonably provide for both categories of students who fall under points 1 and 2 above, after discussing this issue with the other secondary schools in Harrow and the Local Authority. In the meantime, please do not send your students to school on Monday 23rd March unless we have communicated with you directly.

We will be sending vouchers out to parents and carers of children who qualify for free school meals to help with the next two weeks. We can do this by email, so please go on MCAS to confirm that we have the correct email address for you. We anticipate that there will be further information from the government about options available after this time.

We appreciate that you and your exam-aged children may be feeling a sense of huge shock and distress about the news that the public exams will not be happening in May and June and we will communicate about this issue as soon as we have more information and details.

Since the onset of the pandemic, we have been preparing for a potential school closure; our website has a new tab entitled [“Remote Learning”](#). You can find this under the ‘Parents’ tab. Please click [“Remote Learning”](#) to read our Online Learning guidance. When they are learning online, students are asked to follow their usual timetable and access their learning resources through MOOCs on Canvas. MOOC stands for ‘Massive Open Online Course’. If students need paper versions, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate.

We have been fortunate to be in contact with teachers in different parts of the world that have been teaching online for the last five weeks. Their advice is that although the initial few days are challenging; students soon adapt to the new way of working. We will be monitoring use of the learning platforms, and we will be in contact if work is not completed by the deadlines set. Your children will need to make daily contact with their tutor to tell us what work they have been doing each day. Out of every adversity is opportunity and this provides your children with an opportunity to exercise their independence. In the long term this is certainly a positive development, as they need to take more responsibility for their own learning as they progress through their educational journey.

The lack of social interaction can be a particular challenge for young people, so we will in time be including some personal development activities for students. There will be more screen time than most students are used to, so managing time away from electronic devices is also recommended. E-safety will be extremely important for families to discuss; our resources are on our website. I do ask that you discuss this with your children, as it will be much harder for us to do so during the next few weeks. I suggest you proactively monitor your child’s smartphone and social media channels to provide them with any support they may need. It is particularly important that your children are kept safe during this time. If you have any concerns about any child during this period of uncertainty, please call Harrow Child’s Access Team using the **Golden Number**: 020 8901 2690.

We will be asking for your feedback through online surveys to help us adapt and improve the Distance Learning experience. We will be working hard to ensure learning continues as smoothly as possible, but thank you in advance for your patience and cooperation.

We will continue to communicate with you regularly. I know there will be a great deal of uncertainty and anxiety during this time. Thank you for your continued support, and best wishes to your families.

In difficult situations communities can show their strength, and I know that for Rooks Heath College, this has already begun.

Yours sincerely



Mrs M Manderson
Headteacher