

19 March 2020

Dear Parents, Carers, Students, Staff and Friends of the school

On the 18th March, the Government have announced that:

All UK schools will be closed due to Coronavirus after this Friday for an indefinite period

Our thoughts and prayers

I would like to thank each of you for your support, cooperation and messages of good will. I would also like to thank the entire staff body, who have shown a fantastic level of commitment. We continue to pray for the health and well-being of the entire community during this period of social upheaval and isolation.

A large amount of information was sent to each of you on Tuesday 17th March. Today's communication outlines plans for the closure of NDHS to all students, except those whose parents are defined as 'Key Workers', for the foreseeable future.

There is much to be determined and decided regarding the provision for 'key workers' and we will continue to update you as we get more information from the Government and Local Authority.

Teaching and learning

Friday 20th March will be your child/young person's last day at Notre Dame until we are allowed to open again.

The school will be open to Year 7 to 11 on Friday, although please be mindful that the quality of education will vary as we continue to lose staff and therefore ask existing staff to cover lessons outside of their specialism.

On Friday we will close the school at 2.30, after P4.

We are in the process of populating the google classrooms and these should be ready for use by Monday 23rd March. Please refer to Tuesday's documentation on Remote Learning regarding how best to use this resource, and I have attached it once again today.

Year 7 to 10

Students who are still attending school in Years 7 to 10 should take their books home and empty their lockers. We know that there are parents who have children isolating who want to gain access to their books but we will need to work out a safe way for this to happen, and it may prove problematic, if we can find a solution we will let you know. In the interim please email jbryant@ndhs.org.uk so that we can plan a time and date for the collection of your child's locker contents and any books that teachers return to us.

Year 11

Friday 20th March is Year 11's last day at Notre Dame, due to the cancellation of GCSEs. We will allow Year 11 only to attend in non school uniform, and will (within the health guidance we are all working within) celebrate their time as students at Notre Dame. We will also suspend for them for tomorrow our mobile phone rule as we know that they will want to use their phones to capture some

memories. They may also bring their school white shirt, which (again within the health guidance) we will allow to be signed.

I would like to commend our wonderful students, they are a credit to the school and I am really proud of them. They should continue to engage with the online learning and complete their GCSE study, so that if their teachers are asked to evidence any future GCSE grades awarded we are able to show that they have completed their studies and continued to work, even though this is now online.

Year 13

We are really sad that we have not been able to celebrate Y13's achievements and properly mark the end of their on-site education at Notre Dame. We look forward to celebrating their time and achievements with them at the Prize Evening in December. Year 13 should continue to engage with the online learning and complete their A Level programmes, so that if their teachers are asked to evidence their predicted / UCAS grades we are able to show that they have completed their studies and continued to work, even though this is now online.

Year 13 have been a fantastic group of young men and women and I wish them the best and we will support them into the next stages of study, however that is going to be arranged.

Coursework/Non Examined Assessment

With the announcement on examinations being cancelled, we are awaiting further information regarding Non-Examined Assessment. We will update families on this as and when we can.

Exams

The news yesterday took many of us by surprise. Our hearts go out to all year 11 and year 13 students who had been preparing for examinations. We were incredibly impressed by their attitudes and their resilience. Their hard work will not be in vain and the knowledge they have gained will serve them well in the next phase of their education. We are expecting further announcements on examinations and the awarding of grades within the next 24 hours. Further information will be passed on in due course.

With the change to examination procedures and as the dust settles students can begin to consider how they might prepare for A-levels, Level 3 study and higher education. Studying and routines will be important to all young people as our movements and daily lives are altered.

Key Workers

We are waiting on more information regarding who qualifies as a Key Worker, and the Local Authority is coordinating the provision that will be offered to support the children of those who are at the front line of the health and other challenges we are now facing, we will share information when we have it.

Catering

The school, in liaison with the local authority and a national movement of school leaders has investigated how we can ensure that students who receive free school meals will be able to have a lunch from Monday 23rd March until we return. The school, in conjunction with Tesco's has set up a series of 'charge cards' that will allow students on Free School Meals to purchase a lunch on Monday to Friday. Specific information for eligible students will follow.

We expect a national announcement on this in due course.

Trip Refunds

As all trips due to take place before Easter have been cancelled, we are aware that those who were booked on these trips have made payments to the school. We will be issuing **full refunds** to all who have paid, however please bear with us. As you can imagine, this is not a quick process especially with the volume of refunds required and the number of trips that have been cancelled. We are cancelling the individual trips with the companies first and then issuing refunds as the next step.

If you made payments on Wisepay then these will be refunded through Wisepay and paid directly back into the account that they were originally paid from. Any payments made by cash or cheque cannot be refunded electronically and therefore we will be raising cheques to refund the amount paid which will take longer as the cheques have to be manually written and authorised before they can be sent out.

Safeguarding

Parents/carers with any safeguarding concerns can contact David Butters DSL or Shirley Stevenson ADSL on 07771812227 or email dbutters@ndhs.org.uk or sstevenson@ndhs.org.uk - Please note this mobile phone number is for SAFEGUARDING concerns only.

Parents/Carers can also contact the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) on 0344 800 8020

Finally

Please continue to follow [NHS](#) and [Government](#) advice on how to stay safe and well. As a school we look forward to happier times and a return to the normality of daily routine.

Best Wishes

Tom Pinnington – Head of School /Brian Conway - CEO