



19/3/20

## SCHOOL CLOSURE AND CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Dear Parent/Carer

It has been an extraordinary week for schools across the UK and at Friesland, the staff have been working incredibly hard to maintain as much normality as possible for our students. Despite an inevitable drop in attendance figures for both staff and students as the week has unfolded, we have been able to keep the school open to all year groups throughout the week, which has not been the case in the majority of other secondary schools. I do want to publicly put on record my thanks to the staff at Friesland for the way they have willingly supported each other to ensure that lessons for all year groups could continue.

The sense of community has never been more important and I fully recognise how challenging the ongoing situation concerning the coronavirus outbreak will be for families at present. I am very grateful for your support as always.

As I am sure you are aware, yesterday the Secretary of State for Education and the Prime Minister made a series of announcements relating to education and the current crisis. They can be summarised as below:

1. All UK schools will close from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to all students except for children of key workers and those most vulnerable students who have a designated social worker or who are on an Education and Health Care plan (Special Educational Needs)
2. All examinations are postponed in May and June. The Government has stated that no students in Year 11 or Year 13 will lose out as a result of this decision but the detail of how grades will be awarded in the absence of examinations is yet to be announced. We are expecting that announcement at some point tomorrow
3. Provision is being made for Free School Meals students by way of a voucher scheme to enable those students who are eligible to access food in the community – we are still awaiting confirmation of the detail.

In line with the above directive, Friesland will close indefinitely for the majority of our students at the end of the school day tomorrow, Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March at 2.40pm.

We are particularly mindful that students in Years 11 and 13 will be feeling a range of emotions at present. We have held assemblies for both year groups today to try to reassure them as best we can. We will continue to communicate with them and update them after school is closed.

We will be making extensive use of Google Classroom to enable online learning to continue during the extended period of school closure. Mr Patterson has put a document together for students outlining the protocols for how this will work and this is being sent home with this letter. We have requested that any parent of a home where there is not internet access lets us know so that we can provide paper resources. We have been putting a list together this week. Please do let us know if

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# Friesland<sup>SCHOOL</sup>



you have not yet done so. As school will remain open for some students, we can arrange for work to be collected from main reception or posted home.

As a school, we are very aware that there will be parents and carers that work for the NHS, Emergency Services, Social Care and Supermarket Drivers etc and invite you to contact us as soon as possible (**no later than 2.40pm on Friday 20th March**) if that includes you. A number of parents have already been in touch. Alongside our provision for vulnerable students this will enable us to plan to be able to educate them from **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** in a safe environment.

As has been the case in most schools, we have a number of upcoming visits/trips that have had to be cancelled / postponed. At present we are not processing refunds as we hope to offer these visits at a later date or have more detailed information as to whether they can run. We are also in communication with relevant travel companies as to the future planning of these visits. Please be patient with us until more clarity is established.

We will of course be keeping our website up to date with the latest news regarding Friesland and online teaching provision, so please check it regularly for ongoing updates.

Please do get in touch if you have concerns

Yours sincerely

Mr Peter Monk - Headteacher

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