

19th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Coronavirus update – school closure to most pupils

It is not the first time that this letter to you has been attempted however, following constant revisions to Government directives it has been our concern not to distribute mixed or empty messages. Following revised Government policy we have now been instructed to close the school to almost all children after this Friday until further notice. If you wish to read the statement from the Secretary of State for Education, Gavin Williamson, it can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/schools-colleges-and-early-years-settings-to-close>

We will do all we can to stay open for the children of families of key workers. We have been informed that this is where both parents are key workers, or in the case of the key worker being a single parent. We are awaiting definitive guidance on what constitutes 'key workers'. For now, our working definition is that key workers include NHS staff, teachers, police officers and PCSOs, prison officers, probation staff, armed forces, social workers, firefighters and workers in essential logistics. We will provide a definitive definition when it becomes available. For now, if you believe you are a key worker and your occupation does not fall within this list please do contact us.

We will also remain open for children with specific identified needs. If your child falls under another this category we will contact you directly.

For both groups of children detailed above the school will be open from 8:30am until 3:30pm each day up to and including 1st April.

If you have been identified as a key worker under this definition it would help us if you could inform us by 2pm tomorrow if you intend to continue to send your child to school next week to access the on-line provision offered to all other pupils. Would you please also provide updated contact details ie places of work and contact numbers. Please also supply any dietary requirements / allergies that your child has as we will be providing a morning snack and lunch for all students who remain in school. Those children who will be attending school will not be required to wear uniform. Please contact us as soon as possible either by phone 01474 533082, email offadmin@sgsce.co.uk or by coming in person to school reception.

If your child is entitled to free school meals via pupil premium funding a packed lunch will be available for collection from the Olive Grove between 12 and 1pm each school day until 1st April. If you wish to access this provision please advise us by 2pm tomorrow (Friday 20th March) either by phone 01474 533082, email offadmin@sgsce.co.uk or by coming in person to school reception. Beyond this date we are expecting the Government to have introduced a national voucher system. We are awaiting specific guidance.

All other children will need to stay at home, so we ask that you do not send your child into school from Monday onwards if they have not been identified in the groups above. Please note that this is a national closure – as you may have heard in the news – so while it is a challenging situation, we are not alone. We'll re-open fully as soon as we can and will provide regular updates on our website, parent call and email.

In respect of the great majority of our children who will now be at home can I assure that your child's learning is of course important to us. We will continue to support your child in their learning initially through the provision of materials already available on line via our website and additionally, as from Wednesday 25th March, through two key platforms; **Google Classrooms** (All Years) and **GCSE Pod** (Years 9-11) Both can be accessed through their respective websites or via their apps which are available for download.

Google Classrooms: Teachers will be using Google Classrooms to set work and assignments, as well as providing feedback for students all in one place. Google classrooms will also allow teachers to boost collaboration amongst their classes and maintain communication throughout this period of closure. The work set may be in the form of assignments, quizzes and tests, questions to promote class discussion online as well as uploading any work packs or materials that students may need. Lessons will be delivered according to the revised student time-tables available via insight or by request to the school office for a printed copy. Please do be mindful of the fact that this provision will remain dependent upon the availability of staff.

GCSEPod - is an award-winning digital content and revision provider. Your child has access to GCSEPod's library of over 6,000 'Pods,' 3-5 minute videos designed to deliver knowledge in short bursts. Every Pod is mapped to the correct exam board, and contains all the right facts, quotes, keywords, dates and annotated diagrams that your child needs for success – all neatly organised into topics and exam playlists. During the period of closure teachers may be setting your child work on GCSEPod in the form of assignments which students can access and complete via the GCSEPod platform; or teachers may recommend specific Pods for students to watch at home to continue their learning. In addition, students can browse the GCSEPod library and create their own playlists – just as they would when they're listening to music. For more ways to support your child using GCSEPod, please visit www.gcsepod.com/parents where you'll find lots more information and resources. Students have been issued with instructions of how to get started via email and in letter form.

Students have received guidance and instructions of how to access Google Classrooms and GCSE Pod. If you require any further support please go to <http://support.aaat.uk> where you will be able to raise support calls/live chats with our technical team and access support documents for using these platforms.

If your child is unable to access e-learning please let us know either by phone 01474 533082, email offadmin@sgsce.co.uk or by coming in person to school reception and we will post printed learning packs home to you.

This is as much as we currently understand of the situation and we appreciate your continued patience and support as we deal with this ever-changing landscape. We appreciate that this latest news will have an impact on you and your family and it's far from ideal, but we'll continue to keep in touch with any updates as the situation develops.

If you want to get in touch to share any concerns, please don't hesitate to do so via the school office either by phone 01474 533082 or email offadmin@sgsce.co.uk

Please be assured that the wellbeing of our school community is always our highest priority and we will endeavour to respond effectively and efficiently to each new scenario that this unprecedented situation presents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Carey', enclosed within a large, thin, hand-drawn oval.

Stephen Carey

Executive Headteacher

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Matthew Lillie', written in a cursive style.

Matthew Lillie

Head of Secondary School