

19th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Temporary Closure of Sheffield Park Academy

As you will be aware, the Government has announced that all schools in England will close temporarily, for the vast majority of children, from the end of the day on Friday 20th March. Sheffield Park Academy will be closing at 1:30pm but students will be able to have their lunch prior to going home.

This decision has been taken on the advice of medical and scientific experts in order to manage the spread of COVID-19 and relieve pressure on the health system.

From Monday 23rd March, students' education will continue from home. By the end of this week we will send you specific details of how this will operate. We have prepared well for these circumstances so that all our students can continue their education from home during the closure. I am extremely grateful to staff across the academy for the way in which they have taken on this challenge.

Key Workers and Vulnerable Students

The Academy will, however, remain open for two specific groups of students:

- Those whose parents are defined as key workers (employed in the NHS, emergency services or elements of the food supply chain);
- Those who are particularly vulnerable.

I would ask that parents who believe they fall into the category of key workers contact the academy as soon as possible and no later than **12 noon on Friday 20th March** via info@sheffieldparkacademy.org so that we can arrange for your child to continue to attend school.

We will be identifying those students who are in the second category and will be contacting their parents and carers separately. If you believe your child falls into this latter category and you have not heard from us by 9:00am on Friday 20th March, please contact us on the above email address.

Communication

We have updated the academy website - www.sheffieldpark-academy.org - with information about how students can access online learning as well as key contact details should you or they need IT help, safeguarding support or for general enquiries.

Teachers will be interacting with students online daily and we will also continue to use the academy's text messaging and email systems to keep parents updated and to discuss any operational matters.

Sheffield Park Academy
Beaumont Road North
Sheffield S2 1SN
t 0114 2392661
f 0114 2659835

e info@sheffieldparkacademy.org
www.sheffieldpark-academy.org

Principal: Mrs D. McShane

Online Learning for Students

All children who have been in school over the past week have received instructions on how to access Microsoft Teams within the Office 365 suite. We have issued password reminders to students and will also send these out to parents and carers over the next few days. For students who have not been in school, there are comprehensive instructions about how to access MS Teams on the academy website and they can also access instructional videos on YouTube.

Given our expectation that students access online learning to a significantly greater degree than ever before, we will also be communicating online safety advice to both parents/carers and children and this information will also be posted on the academy website.

Examinations

The Government has also decided that no external exams will take place this academic year. Over the coming days, they will announce plans for how those due to sit them this year will be able to gain their qualifications. I know how important this will be for our older students and we will be ensuring that whatever is put in place can be implemented through the academy in a way that does not penalise any of our students' places at University or VI Form.

It may be that teacher assessments and predicted grades will be at the heart of the system this year. If so, it is possible that we will need to justify our assessed grades using students' work on paper and in books. For students in Years 11 and 13, therefore, while preparation for traditional exams will not be the focus, we are likely still to want to work intensively with them in the coming weeks so that whatever is ultimately assessed for qualifications is representative of each students' best ability.

Students in Receipt of Free School Meals

Over the next few days we will be in a position to update you further and provide additional information on ways we will be able to support your child during this time. In particular, we will be finalising how we can ensure that students on Free School Meals will receive entitlement to food. We will be doing everything we can to deliver whatever is required of us by Government.

We are entering times of further uncertainty, speculation and concern and our responsibility as a school, like yours as a parent/carer, is to give our young people the learning, support and reassurance that they will need in the coming weeks.

We will continue to update parents/carers on a regular basis with important information as we receive it. We will continue to communicate with you by email but please do regularly check on the academy website.

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Thank you for your continued support and for working with us in the weeks ahead.



Mr C. Dillon
Executive Principal



Mrs D. McShane
Principal

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