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18th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following the Secretary of State for Education's statement in the Houses of Parliament this evening, I am writing to you with an update on the current situation.

The school will remain **closed** to all children in Year 8, 9 and 10 for Thursday 19th and Friday 20th March.

Year 7, 11, 12 and 13 **can attend** school on Thursday 19th March and we will send further information about attending on Friday 20th.

There is no precedent, within our lifetimes, for the decisions that the Government is having to make. Mass school closures could have the effect of collapsing the NHS leading to a substantial civic crisis on top of a public health emergency. The mass closure of schools would have a huge impact on the economy and would mean that many parents could not work. The impact of this on children and young people – on food poverty, safeguarding and welfare – is huge.

In this time of national emergency, I hope you will feel able to support the decisions that the Government is taking in relation to schools, and our response.

At Chiswick, we will play a full part in performing our civic duty in the fight against COVID-19.

Schools are education institutions. But in this hour of need, we need to limit provision from Monday to a basic level of care for the most vulnerable and the children of front line workers.

All schools have a number of colleagues who are self-isolating. In order to play our part, and in light of the announcement from the secretary of state, **we are therefore closing to pupils at the end of the school day on Friday 20th March**. This is until further notice.

This is for all children **with the exception of those who are on the frontline of the fight against COVID-19 and for those that are most vulnerable**.

We will, therefore, be open only for the children of key workers and those that are most vulnerable. This includes the children of those working in the National Health Service, police and delivery drivers or other people identified in due course by the government.

Vulnerable children includes those that have EHCPs and those that have social workers.

You will have heard that there will be no public examinations this year in either year 11 or year 13. We await further information from Ofqual, but I want to assure parents and pupils that we will work with other educational institutions to ensure pupils are on appropriate courses and that our pupils are not disadvantaged.



We urge all pupils to understand that continuing to study from home during our closure places them in the best possible position to continue their studies when we get back to school.

We know that keyworkers will need support during the Easter holidays. I will immediately find out if we can open for keyworkers during this extended period. We have a commitment to do so.

For those families whose children are entitled to free school meals by way of application, we will make arrangements so that this is available to you in some form.

Teachers and support staff in our schools have already prepared resources and made other preparations for pupils to learn at home. Over the next two days, we will work hard to distribute these.

I will write to you tomorrow with further details. I know that you will have a number of questions, but I ask you to refrain from asking them until I have met with my colleagues and am able to outline more details about how we might operate.

I understand that this is a turbulent time. I know that our children may be confused or angry. I also know that parents may not agree with the decisions that the Government is making. I ask that you trust that we are making the very best decisions we can in the face of a national emergency.

These truly are extraordinary times. Thank you for your support and forbearance. We must each play our part in fighting this virus.

I want to repeat that we consider ourselves part of the community. If this announcement causes you significant difficulty, please contact us tomorrow on the email address enquiries@chiswickschool.org.

Very best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Ellener', written in a cursive style.

Laura Ellener
Headteacher