



Coronavirus Update: Arrangements for School Closure

20 March 2020

Dear Parent / Carer,

It is with a heavy heart that we will be closing the school at 2:45pm on Friday 20 March 2020 until further notice. We find ourselves in an unprecedented situation and we have been doing all that we can to keep the school open and support our families and the local community. Our priority has been to maintain our 'Commitment to Excellence' and the staff here have been extraordinary; please be reassured that we will continue to do everything that we can to support our young people and their families whilst the school remains closed.

As you will be aware, the government has directed schools in England to close as an additional method to prevent the spread of COVID-19. From Monday, the school can provide support for the following children: those with an EHCP; those with an allocated Social Worker or those with parents/carers who are identified as Critical Workers.

Children of Critical Workers & Children with an EHCP or allocated Social Worker

Yesterday, we contacted all parents/carers and asked those who are Critical Workers to contact us if they intended to send their child into school. We have also contacted all parents/carers of those students who have an EHCP or an allocated Social Worker so that we can begin to coordinate provision. Please understand that whilst we desperately want to support families, we politely ask you to work with us and respect the decisions taken. This is to ensure we follow government guidelines and reduce the risk of your child being infected. If your child falls into one of the above categories and it is absolutely essential that you send your child into school, the following will apply:

- Students will be supervised completing the learning activities that have been sent to those students who are not permitted to attend school.
- If you are eligible and have indicated that your child will be attending school, we politely ask that you inform school in the usual way if they are not able to attend. This is to ensure we can adequately safeguard those children who do not arrive. Please understand that staffing will be limited; making additional phone calls to parents/carers will only add to the burden that schools are currently under and could compromise the safety of your child.
- The timings of the school day will run as normal. Again, if your child is on our list of expected students but will arrive late or needs to leave early, this must be communicated with school in the usual way.
- Students on site will be able to buy food and drink at break and lunchtime however, food choices will be limited. If the situation changes and we no longer have catering facilities, we will communicate this to you. If your child is entitled to a free school meal, this will be provided.
- If you are eligible and have not indicated that your child will be attending school, you must contact the school by 12pm the day before so that we can ensure we have the provision and the staffing; students arriving into school who are not expected could put unnecessary strain on the resources that we have and the measures we are putting in place to reduce group sizes / social distancing.
- Please refer to the recently published guidelines to check if you qualify as a Critical Worker. If the number of students in school is not manageable, we may need parents/carers to provide evidence of employment or limit access to school in situations where both parents/carers are Critical Workers or where the Critical Worker is the only parent/carer.

We hope you will recognise the difficult times schools now face. As Critical Workers ourselves, it is essential that we all pull together to support each other and you can do this by minimising your call on our limited resources. Depending on our levels of staffing, we may need to review provision on a case by case basis. Any eligible students who attend school may be asked to leave if they demonstrate behaviour that is not manageable in the current context.

Access to work for students not in school

By now, you will have received comprehensive information about work that students can complete at home. We will continue to update this and provide students with as much work as possible; it's important that students have routine and structure and we would encourage them to follow their normal timetabled lessons using the subject specific resources provided. We will continue to add to these resources so that students can continue to work remotely. Should your child be experiencing any difficulties with our remote learning resources / logins, please can these be directed to



ICTServicesTeam@wadedeacon.co.uk Also, if your child is entitled to a free school meal and not in school, we will contact you with up to date information about how these can be collected.

Safeguarding / Support for Student Welfare (SHARP)

As you will be aware, the safeguarding and safety of all of our students is very important to us. We pride ourselves on the relationships we have with our students and the proactive and preventative approach we take to keeping all of our children safe. For some of our students, being away from school can be a time of anxiety and worry. We also appreciate that parents and carers might also be concerned about how they can support their child during this period especially when school has provided a network of support and guidance. Should you have any safeguarding concerns during the period of closure, you should email Safeguarding@wadedeacon.co.uk This account will be monitored regularly during the closure period. Please note, staff will not be expected to respond to these emails during the Easter break. We must make you aware that we cannot guarantee that immediate safeguarding concerns will be responded to straight away. If you have any immediate concerns for the safety of your child or another child, please contact:

- Children's Social Care for Halton: **0151 907 8305**, Mon – Thurs 9am-5pm, Fri 9am 4.30pm.
- Outside of these times contact the Emergency Duty Team on **0345 050 0148**.
- If a child is in immediate danger call the police on **999** or for non-emergencies **101**.

The school website will remain a source of information and guidance for families throughout this time. If a student has a concern that they would like to share with school then they can use the SHARP system found in the student area on our school website. Concerns can be logged anonymously but whilst we are not in school, we would recommend that students leave their details so that staff can assist. We would advise students to use this method of communication rather than email staff directly.

Year 11 Students / Examinations

We would like to extend our heartfelt sympathy to Year 11 students and their families who have worked so hard to prepare for GCSE Examinations. Currently, we are unclear as to how the GCSEs will be awarded but we have been reassured that they will not be disadvantaged. Our advice is that students continue to work on coursework pieces that would have contributed to their GCSE grade. It's also really important that students keep their brains active and support younger siblings at home with their home learning. The school's advisor for Careers, Mrs Conlon, will still be available throughout the duration of the closure by telephone or email to advise students and families. She can be contacted on 0151 511 7464 or email jane.conlon@halton.gov.uk We are incredibly proud of our Year 11 cohort and are confident that they will respond to this crisis with maturity and resilience.

We are aware of a small number of students in other year groups who would have also taken examinations in the summer; we will clarify the situation for these students as soon as we are able to do so.

Communication

We would like to remind you that School Synergy, our website and social media accounts will be used as the official method of communication during the period of closure. Where possible, please avoid ringing the school to allow us to focus on the essential work that has been asked of schools at this time. If you do wish to email school, please contact school@wadedeacon.co.uk A small group of staff will have access to this and we will only be able to respond to correspondence that is absolutely essential.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to parents/carers for their understanding at this difficult time. We are also incredibly proud of all of students and staff who have handled this challenging situation tremendously. In the meantime, we wish all of our students and families well and look forward to being able to open up our doors again to all of our students.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Simon Corner (Principal)