

19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

As you know, we are all facing extraordinary challenges at this time and the situation is placing pressure on all parts of society. Our staff have been doing all they can to keep our school open, since this crisis began and I would like to pay tribute to their remarkable commitment. They have been extraordinary, and we will continue to play our part over the coming weeks.

As you may be aware, the Government made several very important decisions yesterday evening (Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> March) about schools. There will be further detail to follow but I wanted to ensure you had as much information as possible as early as possible.

**The first** is that it has advised schools in England to close, except for certain groups of children, from this Friday afternoon (20<sup>th</sup> March) onwards as a further measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. No date has been set for when schools will re-open for all students. Taking this into account, we will be closing the school from 12.30pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March.

From Monday, the school will continue to be open for the following groups of students:

- Children whose parents are frontline workers – the Government has said these would include NHS staff, police and supermarket delivery drivers. However, others will be in this category and we expect to hear more from the Government on this in the coming days
- Those classed as what the Secretary of State described as “vulnerable children”. These could be those who have a social worker and those with EHCPs

For students in these groups, we have also been asked to remain open through the Easter holidays and we will do our best to achieve this. From Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March and through this period, our school will provide care for these children. We will be offering wraparound care from 8am to 5pm each day, Monday to Friday, based on education, sport and leadership.

As soon as I have more information on the above groups, I will share it with you and will then ask for parents/carers who fall within this remit and are accepting this provision to contact the school.

Children who do not fall into the groups listed above should remain at home with appropriate care.

**The second key announcement** is that tests and exams will not take place this summer. For children and young people, who have worked so hard to prepare for their SATs and GCSEs, this will be upsetting, and we sympathise with them. At the same time, we understand the decision the Government has made, and we are reassured that children's grades in GCSEs will be awarded on the basis of moderated assessment, in conjunction with the exam boards and Ofqual. This means that the hard work students

have done will be rewarded. It may not feel quite the same, and nor is it, but they will receive grades that will progress them to the next stage of their lives.

Whilst we understand that this may cause disruption for you and your family, we have robust plans in place so that your child can continue their education during this time. As always, we are committed to ensuring that our students receive the best possible education and will be working hard to minimise the impact of the closure on your child's progress and development. All student work will be clearly signposted on the academy website <http://www.ormistonhorizonacademy.co.uk/home-learning/>. This will give your son/daughter clear guidance on what work they need to complete for every subject. We will monitor and review this on a weekly basis. Please feel free to email any of member of staff with questions and queries and they will do their utmost to reply within the academy working hours. Staff emails are available via our website at:

<http://www.ormistonhorizonacademy.co.uk/about-us/meet-the-staff/>

### **Years 7-9**

We are committed to providing learning platforms during this uncertain time. Subject staff have produced project-based activities for your son/daughter which will encourage students to practice skills, give them an educational focus and stimulate their understanding of each curriculum area. An outline of subject revision is on the academy website <http://www.ormistonhorizonacademy.co.uk/home-learning/>. Please allow 48 hours from partial or full closure for these materials to be uploaded. A step by step guide for how to access OneDrive (accessible through the school email system) is available on the website.

### **Year 10**

With preparation for mock exams underway, subject leads have compiled home learning revision information for your son/daughter. An outline of subject revision is on the academy website <http://www.ormistonhorizonacademy.co.uk/home-learning/>. Please allow 48 hours from partial or full closure for these materials to be uploaded. A step-by-step guide for how to access OneDrive (accessible through the school email system) is available on the website.

### **Year 11**

We realise that this is an extremely difficult time for all students and not knowing what is expected from us makes it even worse. We encourage all students to continue with active learning during this time period and staff have prepared a range of resources for students to engage in.

- Students have been provided with a 'Home Learning Revision Plan' for each subject they study to guide them through work required to prepare for their examinations/complete coursework – they should tick off each task when complete.
- Where possible it is suggested that students stick to the timetable they would follow if they were still in the academy, to encourage a balance of learning across all subjects.

- Students have been provided with remote access to tasks and resources through OneDrive (accessible through the school email system).
- Students without access have been provided with hard copies of all resources.
- Students can maintain regular communication with their class teachers and school staff through the academy email system.

## Safeguarding

If you require any support with regards to Safeguarding, please find the key information below:

- Stoke Safeguarding Referral Team: (01782) 235100
- Out of Hours Team (after 5pm and weekends): (01782) 234234
- Childline: 0800 1111
- [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- Samaritans: 116 123
- [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) (response within 24 hours)

Please monitor our academy website on a daily basis regarding updates and work for students. All communication will be through the website and the academy text messaging service. In the meantime I would like to take this opportunity to thank you wholeheartedly for your understanding and ongoing support in helping us to manage this unprecedented situation.

Yours sincerely



Mr A Fitzgibbon  
Principal