



**Central Lancaster  
High School**

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19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

**RE: Coronavirus update – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

The government have announced that all schools in England will close from Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March until further notice.

This letter outlines our plans to support our school community during this unprecedented time. We will continue to follow government advice and will keep you informed of the situation as it changes over the coming days/weeks.

The government has indicated that schools will be asked to stay open for priority childcare for the children of key workers and the most vulnerable children e.g. with an EHCP or with a social worker. We will need to ascertain which children this applies to and to understand how many children we will need to provide childcare and supervision for every day. An online questionnaire will be sent out to parents so that we can gather information about keyworkers. A free meal will be available to Free School Meal children when they come into school. After the first week, it is anticipated that the government will provide vouchers so that FSM children can purchase food at a local supermarket.

**Supporting learning at home**

We recognise that this will be a challenging time and we want to reassure you that our priority is to support continued learning as much as possible. We have provided a timetable for each Keystage to structure learning at home, the timetable includes time and suggestions to focus on well-being. Staff will set work on ClassCharts, there are other useful sites and apps which will be used as well. The students will be expected to access and complete this work. Office 365 allows some interaction between the teacher and the student, so the work can be submitted online for staff to mark and give feedback. Staff will monitor this work and provide help and feedback, where necessary, during school hours but please bear with us during this difficult and unprecedented situation. I hope you will understand that staff will not just be on the end of a computer all day to provide instant responses – some will be looking after their own children, some may be ill and some will still be working in school on other duties.

**Difficult times require us to pull together**

These are difficult times for everyone, it is a time to support each other and to simplify things. As a school, we teach our students resilience, respect, understanding and kindness. Over the next few weeks, these are the values that we need to use to support each other. The Coronavirus is likely to affect each family in very different ways and it is important that we acknowledge this and support our whole community as best we can; this includes our teaching and support staff as well as students and families.

**Acting Principal:**

Victoria O'Farrell, BA Hons., NPQH, NPQSL



## **Year 11**

Our Year 11 have been absolutely fantastic this year, we are immensely proud of them! We are therefore disappointed for them and the staff and families who have worked so hard with them to prepare for exams. Every indication we have is that they would have achieved great results and it is important to reassure them that they will not be disadvantaged in their future lives even though we do not yet know how qualifications will be awarded. The Secretary of State for Education has said this evening that: "We can confirm that we will not go ahead with assessments or exams, and that we will not be publishing performance tables for this academic year. We will work with the sector and Ofqual to ensure children get the qualifications they need. My Department is working closely with local authorities, representatives of early years, schools and head teachers, regional school commissioners and bodies such as Ofsted and Ofqual about how to deliver this change as effectively as possible."

I am sure as a school we will need to provide some evidence to support the award of grades and for this reason I would like our Year 11 students to continue working (while we receive further guidance). They should prioritise controlled assessments, coursework or vocational assessments in the short term. I am sure that we will be required to send off work for all of the vocational courses, so students need to keep working on those. For other subjects we do not know yet, however if students keep working and learning for now, this will keep their brains active and retain knowledge for the future. I will keep you informed as soon as I receive information. We will definitely look at how we can celebrate with Year 11 at some point in the future so they do not miss out on their special leaving assembly and prom.

## **Year 10**

Students will be set work via ClassCharts that links to their exam board specifications. It is important that they continue with their learning and remember their prior learning. There is still a long time to go until the final exams for this year group and we will find ways to get everyone back on track, however it is important that the students continue their learning while physically away from school. Please also encourage Year 10 students to use GCSE Pod and the other online apps and websites.

## **KS3 Work**

This will be set on ClassCharts. Please encourage your children to read books, fiction and non-fiction and to watch Newsround to keep abreast of what is happening in the world (from a student appropriate source). We understand that there may not be enough technology in the household for all to be working online at the same time, so some of the work requires students to work on paper.

## **Positive Family Time**

I recognise that children should have a well-rounded education and you can learn a lot from different life experiences. This will be a real opportunity for students to take greater responsibility within the family home to help prepare meals or with chores around the house. You could spend family time together reviewing the ways your family can re-use or recycle more or to reduce our carbon footprint, and researching how we can do this.

Please remember that spending time as a family and away from screens is also beneficial for mental well-being. It is not a good experience to spend all day in front of a screen or watching television the whole time. Consider playing cards or board games, writing letters to family members or friends or neighbours who are self-isolating, drawing, learning DIY.

We recommend talking through as a family the best way to structure the day and this is likely to change. It is important to build in time to talk and listen to how you are all feeling, review hygiene in the home, check on family members and neighbours, spending time exercising. Supporting others with acts of kindness and all of these other things are going to be as important as academic studies.

These are the links to the latest government advice, it is updated regularly. Please do keep abreast of the changes and advice.

DfE /PHE Covid-19: guidance for Education Settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

DfE/PHE Covid-19: stay at home guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Government travel guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Government guidance on social distancing

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

We will continue to do what we can to support you, please be understanding as this is a new experience for us too. We do not know how the internet is going to cope with the whole country being away from school and moving to online learning. Please continue to check our school website, Facebook, instagram and ClassCharts. Staff will be working at home to support (with a few in school to supervise those vulnerable children). Staff will also be caring for their own family so please be patient and support them with the same kindness and respect.

We will find our way through this together and learn a lot on the way, a lot of good can come out of difficult situations. Thank you for your fantastic support to all of our community.

Yours sincerely,



Victoria O'Farrell