

30 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

I hope this finds you and your families well and coping as well as can be expected in these difficult times. I wanted to take the chance to offer some updates and reminders as we embark on another challenging week.

First of all, I am sure you have all been watching the Daily Government Coronavirus updates and noticing the increase in the number of Coronavirus confirmed cases, along with the number of deaths from the virus increasing. The Government's clear message is that the only way for us all to avoid catching the virus is for us to remain at home at all times. Should we have to leave our homes it should be for one of three reasons only: essential food shopping, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home). Unfortunately, I have to start with a couple of 'moans':

As an Alternative Provision Academy, we fall under the 'schools' bracket and are required to remain open for vulnerable children who need to be in school and are not safe at home or for the children of critical workers, who are also not safe at home. I have carried out a risk assessment with my senior colleagues and we have a small number of children who fit into this government recommendation and therefore I have to ask my staff to continue to make themselves available for work...and they have. However, during our welfare checks this week we have discovered that a number of children who we have called to check on have been 'out with friends'. Not only is this against government orders but it puts my members of staff at risk of contracting the virus, it also puts you and your family at risk of contracting the virus and, where you are front-line national health service worker, it puts you, the doctors and nurses and careworkers you are working with, at risk of contracting the virus. I must ask those of you who wish your child to be in school with us during the school week, to 100% assure me that your child has been at home at all other times than when in school with us and if you cannot do this, do not send them in to school. You are responsible as parents for making sure your child stays at home and for ensuring that your child does all s/he can to prevent the spread of this deadly virus. I am responsible for making sure my staff are safe. We have not been provided with PPE, we couldn't buy any by the time the virus presented, and are not currently on the government list to receive any, so I must ensure that my staff, who are agreeing to work with your children at this time, are as safe as they can be. Furthermore, if during our welfare checks we discover that your child has not been adhering to the rules about staying at home, we have agreed with the police to provide your child's name to them so that they may visit you personally to remind you and your child of the stay at home requirements. The safest place for your child and your family if you do not want to contract the virus is at home.

Secondly - I would like to thank all those parents/carers who we have spoken to when we have called you over the last week, who have thanked us for sending work, food vouchers, helped with 'other bits and bobs', for calling to check on your child and you all, visiting your

child, working online with your child or just being another voice to chat to. It really matters to us that our children are safe but you as families matter to us too. It has been great for me to read the 'contact logs' each day and to see the many activities you and your children are taking part in together. These are tough times but it is a real opportunity for us to be spending some quality time with our families and working through this together.

Unfortunately, during our welfare checks, we have had great difficulty in contacting some parents. We have also left messages and not had a response. Could I just highlight that when we call, many of my staff are calling from home and therefore under safeguarding regulations cannot share their number with you and so the call will come up as either 'No Caller ID' or 'Withheld number' - please do not ignore these calls. It is very important that we speak to you when we call and that we check on how your child is getting on. If you do not answer, and we cannot make contact with you on two consecutive occasions we may come and visit your house or, where we have particular concerns that you are not engaging with us, we will contact social services or the police in order to carry out their own welfare checks. If however, we have left a message and you would like to call us back, please call the normal office number for Banbury or Oxford and your call will be redirected to staff at home or the mobile numbers for each base team that you normally call. The same would apply if you need to contact us urgently for assistance.

Meadowbrook College remains open to a few children on our Banbury and Oxford sites and we will continue to offer provision on the bases over the usual Easter holiday period for those students in the more vulnerable category and those whose parents are critical workers and need to be in school. We will carry out another risk assessment this week of all students and I will deploy staff as needed to welfare checks/visits and on site working over the Easter period. The majority of our students can have a 'holiday' from us/school but we will want to keep an eye on a number of our students if we think it is appropriate. We will let you know more before the end of the week.

Year 11 Exams update - information on examinations is due from the government this week. I will make this available to you as soon as I have it. The current statement/guidance is on the [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) website but guidance typically changes from week to week so I suggest we wait for next week's release before making any plans for the future.

I do hope you and your families are all well and if you have been suffering with the virus that it has not been too serious and you are making a good and speedy recovery. Best wishes.
Nicola

Nicola Partridge
Headteacher

