



Thursday 19th March, 2020.

Dear Parents and Carers,

You will be aware of the government's decision to close schools to pupils with the exception of those classed as the children of "key workers" and also vulnerable pupils. Despite the decision being announced 24 hours ago the government haven't provided specific guidance as to who qualifies in these two categories. As it stands we have started the process of collating who we think would qualify in these groups, we have also asked parents to self-identify if they feel they will be classed as a "key worker".

The government have also announced a potential voucher scheme for those pupils eligible for free school meals, but as yet, details regarding this have not been provided to schools.

In the absence of detail we have finalised our course of action in relation to how we think the situation will progress, based on the snippets of information we've been able to piece together from news conferences and interviews given by members of the cabinet.

Continuous working

Pupils have all been briefed on TEAMS, the app available through pupils' Office 365 login. We are using this platform to share all of the resources for pupils to complete. Staff will be doing so in line with the current timetable, so resources will be made available in line with when pupils have their usual timetabled lesson in each subject.

For pupils absent from school we'd expect them to login to Teams during normal weeks of school operation (i.e. not holiday weeks) and complete the resources for each of their classes across the day. This will provide pupils with structure to their day and keep them engaged in learning. It's essential that pupils continue to build their knowledge and skill base ahead of future study when schools are able to open.

Pupils expected to attend school inline with government guidance, as identified above, will be provided with the opportunity to complete their resources provided by staff on a lesson-by-lesson basis in TEAMS whilst in school. As normal setting is disbanded as a result of the majority of pupils being absent from school, this will allow pupils to self-mange their work inline with their current timetable and, like pupils at home, benefit from having work set by their usual teacher.

TEAMS allows for messages to be left for staff about the resources should a pupil need some guidance relating to the work. The member of staff will respond to this when they can, but it's important to note that this won't necessarily be in "real time".

Guidance relating to how to login and use TEAMS to access resources is available on the Coronavirus page of the school website. If you need support when accessing Office 365 you can email remoteteaching@penkethhigh.org

Staff

The staff will be continuing to work hard to support pupils in the coming weeks, but this is very much an exceptional situation. Gavin Williamson has stated that pupils will not be engaging in the national

PART OF THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST | NURTURE | CHALLENGE | ACHIEVE

THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST C/O PRIESTLEY COLLEGE, LOUSHERS LN, WARRINGTON WA4 6RD. COMPANY NUMBER 10689247

Penketh High School, Heath Road, Penketh, Warrington, WA5 2BY

Tel: 01925 722298 Fax: 01925 723812 e-mail: principal@penketh.warrington.sch.uk Website: www.penkethhighschool.co.uk

Principal: Mr J Carlin BA(Hons) NPQH





national curriculum during this time, but as stated above we are planning on delivering resources for classes following a pupils "usual" timetable to keep them engaged. I have therefore asked staff to prioritise the setting of work and responding to queries raised through TEAMS by pupils. This is likely to absorb their capacity at this time.

We should also remember that during this difficult and unprecedented period, staff themselves may suffer from illness or other factors that prevent them responding to queries or uploading work. We will work with staff and other departmental colleagues where we can to resolve any issues; but would request your understanding during this period.

Vulnerable pupils

Whilst a number of our vulnerable pupils will continue to attend school, giving us the chance to check on them and offer support; a large number of pupils who need additional support will not be part of the group defined as "vulnerable" by the government. Our pastoral teams will continue to take a proactive approach during this period, offering general advice and guidance through social media channels and our website; but also specific advice and guidance to individual pupils and families who would benefit from wider support.

Free School Meals

As mentioned earlier, the government have suggested a voucher scheme for pupils who are entitled to a free school meal will be introduced, but at present no detailed plan has been presented to schools. We are in the process of securing our own vouchers and distributing these to families. We will be in contact on Monday to discuss this with individual families. Of course, we will continue to provide catering for the pupils eligible for a meal who remain in attendance to school.

We are in a time of great uncertainty and as a school we've tried to take a proactive approach to managing the situation for our own pupils, whilst reacting to a fluid situation that, in some cases, has changed on an hourly basis. Can I thank you for your patience, support and kind words over the last few days. We are determined to continue to offer an educational provision for our young people to maintain a structure and purpose to their daily routine. Whilst we understand the temptation to treat this as a long holiday, the danger is that pupils become disengaged in learning for a prolonged period; this will negatively impact on their reintegration to school further down the line. We'd appreciate you discussing the importance of pupils accessing their resources each day with your own child.

I'm extremely proud of our school community and the relationship with pupils and families is an integral part of this. Like any community, it's crucial that as such times as those presented to us now we do our best to look after and support each other. Whilst I will be updating families regularly on any updates to the situation or to our planned action, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family all the best during what will be a difficult period for all of us.

Yours sincerely,

Mr J Carlin
Principal.

PART OF THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST | NURTURE | CHALLENGE | ACHIEVE

THE CHALLENGE ACADEMY TRUST C/O PRIESTLEY COLLEGE, LOUSHERS LN, WARRINGTON WA4 6RD. COMPANY NUMBER 10689247

Penketh High School, Heath Road, Penketh, Warrington, WA5 2BY

Tel: 01925 722298 Fax: 01925 723812 e-mail: principal@penketh.warrington.sch.uk Website: www.penkethhighschool.co.uk

Principal: Mr J Carlin BA(Hons) NPQH

