



Dear Parents /Carers,

Re: School Closure from Monday 23rd March 2020

I write with a very heavy heart after the announcement by the government to close schools across the country. Our approach in this uncertain time has always been to give reassurance to our community, keep our school open and to support all of our families. In truth, despite our best efforts this week, closure was always inevitable as the country moved further into the delay phase to help relieve pressure on the health system.

Over the past week we have been preparing for closure and putting plans in place to ensure that, although our gates will be closed to the vast majority of our students, we keep the learning going for as long as we can, be it in a different format.

The government's decision has particular impact for our Year 11 GCSE students and our Year 13 A-level students. We have been told that these examinations will **NOT** take place. Intervention has stopped and students are no longer required to prepare for these examinations. This is a very worrying time for these students who have worked tirelessly towards these exams. All we can say is that we will ensure that our students are supported to secure their next step and we await guidance from the government on the way forward.

I have held an assembly with every secondary year group to reassure them and inform them of how we will support them in their learning over the coming weeks. Our primary students have been spoken to by their class teacher. Students have been told:

- Year 11 and Year 13 students are being directed to appropriate reading lists for their 16+ or University courses
- All other students will leave school today or Friday with access to work
- Our primary students work pack will be on the website and updated weekly
- Students at the secondary phase, as well as an initial paper work pack, will be given instructions on how to set-up the Microsoft TEAM application, through which they will be able to digitally access further work and guidance
- Over the period of closure it has been explained to students that, whilst we will try and establish a routine for the setting of work this may not always be possible due to individual teacher circumstances
- We will look to welcome them all back as soon as possible and when we have updates these will be placed on the website
- The primary point of contact is Mr Jacob aja2@sydneyrussellschool.com
- The secondary point of contact is Ms Abankwah fab@sydneyrussellschool.com
- The 16+ point of contact is Ms Dryden sdr@sydneyrussellschool.com

The government have asked schools to remain open to the children of **key workers** who are not ill or in self-isolation. We as a school are ready to play our part in supporting our country during this very difficult time. For planning purposes, if you think you fall into this category and have no alternative childcare arrangements, **please send an e-mail with your child's name and class to office@sydneyrussellschool.com including details why you may be in this category.** We will then contact you to discuss this further.

We are planning to open our doors to these students from 7am to 4:30pm. We will operate from the secondary school site for both primary and secondary children. Students will not be expected to be in uniform and meals will be available. To ensure students safety, once on site they will remain with us until the end of the day unless advised otherwise by parents.

We are also in negotiation with the after school providers that normally work from our primary site to try and ensure an unbroken service continues on the secondary site until 6pm. We will update you on this service when we have further information.

We are working closely with our caterers, Aspens, to provide for our students who are **entitled to a Free School Meal**. These students will be welcomed on site at the times below to collect either a daily hot meal or a three day food basket which can be prepared at home. Students will need to use the biometric system to access this provision on entry via the entrance to Kingsley block opposite the sports cages. Should they be unwell or in self-isolation the basket can be picked up for them by a nominated person provided that the school has been informed in advance by phone or e-mail. The times for each year group are as follows:

Primary students: 11.30am – 12pm

Years 7-9: 12-12.30pm

Years 10-13: 12.30-1pm

I am acutely aware that the announcement to close schools has left our community with many more questions than answers but I will do my best to keep you updated as further guidance is released by government. Please keep referring to the school's website as we are in fast-changing times.

We are all part of an extremely special school community at SRS and I wish you and all your family well and look forward to the time when we open our gates again and welcome all our students back.

Yours sincerely



Janis Davies
Principal