



**20 MARCH 2020**

Dear Parent/Carer

I am sure that by now you will all be aware of the announcement made by the Prime Minister, where he confirmed that all schools and other education establishments will close at the end of the day today. For the vast majority of students this means that they do not have to attend school until further notice. All schools however will open to support vulnerable students and the children of Key Workers as outlined in government guidance. This can be found on our website or by logging onto:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

The government stressed that 'every child who can be safely cared for at home should be'.

The most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.

That is why the government has asked parents and carers to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.

It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society.

Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children – children who are vulnerable and children whose parents/carers are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.

Vulnerable children include children who are supported by social care, those with safeguarding and welfare needs, including children in need plans, on child protection plans, 'looked after' children, young carers, disabled children and those with education, health and care (ECH) plans.

Normal arrangements for students at The Whitby High School have ceased however, they will resume sometime in the future. I strongly recommend that all students continue to be active in their education and use the work that can be accessed through our Resource Hub <https://sites.google.com/whitbyhs.cheshire.sch.uk/twhs-resource-hub/home> This will also be available through our website.

We continue to await information and guidance with regards to examinations, and as it is unlikely formal examinations will take place, we are working hard to ensure we have all the necessary information ready if examination boards require it. Please be assured I will be scrutinising the methods by which decisions are made to ensure our students receive the grades they deserve.

The past week has been a difficult one for everyone but particularly for our young people. I have been impressed with how they have all taken the situation at what is a worrying time for them. They are a credit to you and to our school community.

It is clear that some students are anxious so please take time to talk to them and reassure them. Family time and the love of those around them is important not only to them but also to you. I believe we may be facing a difficult few weeks ahead with a media base that bombards us all with 'the very latest'. Please remember they are youngsters and may be frightened.

I will keep you informed as things progress over the coming weeks, but now please accept my sincere thanks for your help and support. Please take care and I look forward to welcoming everyone back into school as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Mr B Heeley  
Headteacher