



# Heathcote School & Science College

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Headteacher: Emma Hillman NPQH, MSc, MA



Friday, 13 March 2020



Dear Parent/Carer,

## Coronavirus update

I hope you are all well and managing to stay calm and grounded in these challenging times. This is like nothing else we have ever managed and so I do not have all the answers but we will try and keep you updated as best as we can.



We are, of course following advice from the Department for Education, Public Health and Waltham Forest and, as you know, at the moment, the advice is to keep schools open. It may be that this situation will change and we will keep you updated; I know it is hard when people are so worried, but please do try not to believe all the stories you read in the press or rumours that you hear.



We do, of course, need to have a plan and are determined that our pupils do not miss out on learning opportunities during a school closure. With this in mind, we are planning lessons, resources and activities that your child would carry out *if* we have to close the school.



For the whole period of any closure, your child would be expected to actively take part in learning whether this is through Show my Homework, Google Classroom, online learning, completing worksheets online or on paper, undertaking projects, reading books, watching podcasts and more. Some of these resources would be online and some would be on paper. Some resources will be available straight away and some would be published online during the closure. We have asked all pupils this morning to let us know if they do not have access to a computer or the internet and will try and make special arrangements for these pupils – please contact the Teaching and Learning team via phone or email [teaching.learningadmin@heathcote.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:teaching.learningadmin@heathcote.waltham.sch.uk) if you have concerns. Please make sure that from home all those that do have access can log onto all the platforms we use such as Show my Homework (SMH) and Mathswatch – details of the former have been sent out again earlier in the week, please ask them to speak to subject teachers if they have concerns. Mr Gallacher can help with any issues around SMH ([rgallacher@heathcote.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:rgallacher@heathcote.waltham.sch.uk)). We are also looking to provide details of Google classroom to further support your child's learning.



supporting individual excellence



During a closure, your child would be expected to communicate online with each of their teachers to ask for help, to submit completed work or to request more work. Some children will be allocated a Teaching Assistant who they would also communicate with online. Obviously this is new to everyone so further details will follow as we develop our plans. It is essential that Year 11 and 13 pupils apply themselves 100% to their studies to ensure their futures are secure and they achieve the best possible grades. We are in discussion with exam boards to consider all the issues around exams and will update you when we can. We are particularly concerned about practical exams such as Drama and Music and how these would operate in a closure situation. I would of course ask for your help in ensuring that all children



in all year groups complete all work set for them to the best of their ability. This will ensure they are not disadvantaged by any school closure.

I am also aware that we have pupils who are entitled to free school meals and we would like to be able to, subject to DfE guidance and catering capacity, consider how we can continue to provide these for pupils. If you are concerned about this and would like to be considered for this support, please contact Ms Warden via phone or email [cwarden@heathcote.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:cwarden@heathcote.waltham.sch.uk).

I will write to you again if schools are instructed to close. In the meantime, please send your child to school as normal, remind them about washing their hands and talk to them about the contents of this letter.

At present, it is business as usual. We may have some difficulties delivering the practical curriculum in Food Tech for example as we cannot order food as easily as normal and teachers will keep pupils updated.

It is unlikely that any trips will be running in the immediate future and we will not be taking Year 10 pupils to the boxing next week. I am unable to comment on the Poland trip at this stage and will provide further information when we have it.

Please consider all the advice provided and contact us if your child will be absent from school by 9.00am if you have made the decision to isolate them or yourselves. This will reduce errors with Truancy Calls. Following a change to national guidance that emerged yesterday, anyone who has a fever (temperature of 37.8 or higher), and or a new, continuous cough, are being advised to self-isolate for 7 days. Please contact the office or me directly via e mail if you your child or a family member has actually been diagnosed or has all the symptoms of the virus. For those of you with vulnerable children or family members, please follow the national Government advice.

On a final note, I wanted to let you know that I have broken my leg and so have not been as visible in school this week – having been confined to my office. I am not, contrary to rumour, self-isolating! I am back at work but may be slightly slower with responses to emails as I need to ensure I am prioritising the most pressing issues at the moment. I have an amazing leadership team who can be contacted or who I can pass things onto so rest assured that again it is business as usual.

Kind regards,



Emma Hillman

Headteacher