

18th March 2020

Dear Parent,

## School Closure Arrangements

I write to provide you with further details about how the school is going to support your child during this period of closure. In the first instance, The Lakes School will be closed until Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020. We have taken the decision to close the school because of the number of staff who are absent due to following the government advice in relation to social distancing. Currently, we do not have any confirmed cases of Covid-19 at The Lakes School. Whilst we intend to open the school on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020, you will understand that circumstances may change in the days and weeks ahead. We will be in touch with further updates before 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

Provided below is information about how the school will continue to support your child. It is important to say that we recognise that you will be prioritising the health of your family and we recognise that the circumstances in your own home may well have an impact on your child's ability to continue with their studies. The information below should be seen as a structure that you can use to support your child with whatever arrangements you are able to put in place at home.

It may seem obvious to say but, during this period of extended closure, it is clearly not possible for a school to fully replicate the quality of education that children would receive if they were physically in school. However, the steps we are taking below should provide you with reassurance that your child's teachers will continue to facilitate your child's learning as far as possible. At this stage, we would like to reassure you that once the school re-opens, your child's teachers will revisit any topics covered during this period of closure.

Between now and Friday afternoon, staff at the school will be working hard to put in place a number of measures that will help your child with their learning at home. You will receive a further update about these specific arrangements before the weekend. I would like to thank you for your understanding whilst staff are afforded the space and time to put these measures in place.

## Self-study Guide

We are currently producing a handy self-study guide for students which we will be publishing soon. This guide will remind students about the tools they have available to support them with their studies and provide answers to some frequently asked questions that will help them shape the learning they can do outside of school. Whilst the guide will be particularly helpful during this period of school closure, it will also support students who may be absent from the school in the future. We look forward to sharing this with you soon.

### **Arrangements for students regarding studying at home**

Setting up a space in your home to support your child with their learning is clearly an important step and it is important that your child feels comfortable; working at a table or a desk with easy access to basic equipment may form part of a good routine. You might like to use your child's timetable as the basis for balancing studies at home. It will not be possible to fully replicate the routine of school lessons but aiming to do a balance of your child's subjects across the week will be helpful. Decide on how to structure your child's day with clear start and finish times.

It is also important that your child maintains a balance between studying, being active, sitting at a computer and being creative or reading. Make sure your child gets some fresh air, build in normal breaks and don't forget to arrange rewards for your child when they have worked hard.

Your child has access to the Office 365 suite of applications which they can access using their school email address and password. In the Links section of the school website you can find all of the links your child will need to help them access their emails etc. If your child has forgotten their password for Office 365, you can email [password@lakes.cumbria.sch.uk](mailto:password@lakes.cumbria.sch.uk) for help.

### **Expectations regarding communications with teachers**

Students and teachers should only communicate with each other using the system approved by the school. Specifically, this is through a school email account and Microsoft Teams. Staff will not respond to communications that come from a student's personal email account.

Students are encouraged to only communicate with their teachers during the hours of 9am to 3.10pm in line with their established timetable. This arrangement will enable students and staff to maintain a similar balance to a normal school day. Outside of these times, in line with normal school routine, teachers will be planning, marking and caring for their families and may not be available for communications. In the first instance, this arrangement is in place until 27<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

Where staff choose to use Microsoft Teams to communicate with a class via a live group session, it will be pre-arranged in line with timetabled lessons and will only be with classes in Years 11, 12 and 13. We understand that some students will not be able to take part in such sessions due to issues with ICT access at home. Your child's teachers will ensure that your child receives all relevant information by other means.

Where sessions are arranged through Microsoft Teams, they will be conducted using audio only. Whilst teachers may share their screen or a whiteboard, online meetings will be conducted with the video function disabled.

### **Expectations regarding communications with Form Tutor**

Our team of Form Tutors are keen to maintain contact with their tutees. Your child's Form Tutor will be available between 8.45-9.00am from Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March so that your child can communicate with their tutor via email or Microsoft



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Teams. In line with our duty to safeguard all students, we will be contacting them via their school email to explain to them how they can still communicate with the school pastoral team should they need to.

### **Arrangements for collecting exercise books and folders for revision purposes**

Students in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 will be able to pop in to school between 10.30am and 3pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> and Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020. We appreciate that your child may not be able to come to school during these times so we would like to encourage friends to pick up books for each other. Should you not be able to pick up books etc during these times, we will arrange for them to be stored in the main hall for collection between 3pm and 4.30pm on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

During these times, we would also encourage students to bring a memory stick should you need to take any of your work off the school network. Alternatively, you can spend a few minutes transferring work to your Office 365 OneDrive storage.

Some of you may not yet have bought revision guides for certain subjects so please bring some money with you if you would like to purchase one.

### **Summer Examinations**

The exam boards know that this current situation is placing undue stress on children. Whilst we do not have any specific updates from the exam boards at the moment, we will of course be in touch as soon as we receive updates.

In closing, I would like to thank you for your patience and understanding at this time. I hope you find this information useful and I wish you and your family well during these uncertain times. We will be in touch soon with further updates.

Kind regards



Andy Cunningham  
Headteacher



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