

## HEADMASTER'S LETTER

### CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

19 March 2020

Dear Parent

I very much regret the need to close the School. RGS is a people place and is such because of the fabulous community, which occupies its buildings and supports its work.

As you will have heard in the media, the Government has announced the closure of all schools, state and independent, with effect from the close of play, tomorrow, Friday 20 March. Please see this letter as formal notification that, save for particular groups of children, this closure will start at 15:40 tomorrow. The closure is defined as 'until further notice'.

#### PROVISION FOR THE CHILDREN OF KEY WORKERS

As advised by the Government, and in line with our determination to serve our community at this difficult time, we will stay open for the children of **key workers** (the definition of key workers is expected from the Government this afternoon, after 15:00) and for vulnerable children. We will also provide payment or meals for those in receipt of Free School Meals until the end of this closure.

Whilst we are waiting for the Government to publish more information on exactly what is defined as a **key worker**, it would help us greatly with planning if you would indicate interest in either provision. We will use this information to contact you directly with support. Please complete these forms by 08:00 tomorrow, Friday 20 March.

[Interest in School Provision](#)

[Interest in FSM – payment or meal provision](#)

Please note this is a national closure, so while it is a challenging situation, we are not alone. We will re-open fully as soon as we are able and I, personally, will contact the whole community on a daily basis via Twitter @RGSHW or InTouch.

#### GCSE AND A LEVEL EXAMS

I will continue to communicate directly with Year 11 and Upper Sixth boys and their parents. I am much saddened by the headline, which indicates the cancellation of public examinations this year. At the time of writing, however, we have no further information about what will replace them and I would urge all boys to continue with their work, as it is inevitable that some form of assessment will be needed. The Deputy Headmaster and I will speak to both groups tomorrow (in our specially configured Queen's Hall).

#### WORKING FROM HOME #SchoolAtHome

We have trialled a #SchoolAtHome day today, to work out any glitches so that we are better prepared for the weeks ahead.

We have, however, some guidance for your sons and would be grateful for your support:

- We expect the boys, particularly the younger boys, to work to a normal timetable. All students should be aware that some teachers will teach to their normal timetable, and may be online to support boys at the normal lesson time. Other teachers, particularly for the older boys, will pick up messages from boys throughout the day.
- Teachers will be setting work for each subject, in a variety of formats. Most of these will be shared via Teams, although some might also be on the VLE. Teaching resources will be on CloudBox, which can be accessed via the login on the website [www.rgshw.com](http://www.rgshw.com), and staff will use subject specific Twitter accounts to share further resources. Boys understand where teachers are posting work and should contact their teacher individually if unsure. Our SIMS app is largely an intranet based piece of software, unfortunately we will not be able to use it whilst offsite to share homework detail; we apologise for this inconvenience.
- Work may be on a lesson or topic basis; this is dependent on the teacher. The boys appreciate the autonomy of their teachers, and we have no doubt that a professional service will be offered.
- We expect at least one piece of work, per subject, per fortnight to be assessed by staff. Staff will work to normal timetables, as much as they are able, around homework.
- We will reward boys hard work using achievement points, we will use as much praise as we can, we are here to support your boys.
- If we have concerns about your son's work, the subject teacher will be in touch via email or a phone call.
- If teachers are unwell, the subject leader in the department (or a representative) will take over the delivery of lessons. This will most likely be via shared resources on CloudBox.
- We are aware that many boys are organising into small online communities. We applaud this, as boys will miss their friends. Please help us in ensuring it supports teaching, rather than hindering. Boys have been asked to keep social interaction to break and lunchtime, as defined in a normal school day.

### **MUFTI TOMORROW**

We will continue, as planned, with our Mufti Day tomorrow to support Wellbeing Week. £1 to form tutors, please.

### **FINALLY, GOOD WISHES**

We are all in uncharted territory, and these are unprecedented actions for us to be taking. Please be assured that we are weighing our decisions carefully and will always support our boys, parents, staff and wider community. We remain immensely proud of our boys, staff and community.

I wish you, your families and communities strength and good health in the coming weeks and months. Please remember that we are always here for you all.

**Philip Wayne**