



TO CARE
TO LEARN
TO ACHIEVE

BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL
A Specialist Business and Enterprise College
with Applied Learning
Headteacher: Mrs H J Phillips

18th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As you know, we are in an unprecedented situation as a result of the coronavirus. I have reluctantly made the decision that a partial closure is required from tomorrow. From Thursday 19th March, and until further notice, only students in Years 7, 10 and 11 will remain in school. Students in Years 8 and 9 will have work set to complete at home. The reasons for this decision are explained below.

Like most schools and organisations, we have a significant number of staff absent as they are self-isolating in line with government instructions. This is because they have family members who are either ill, or cannot be exposed to risk of infection due to underlying health issues or age. So far, due to the commitment and flexibility of staff, we have been able to cover all classes and keep the school open as normal. However, the number of absent staff is increasing on a daily basis. From tomorrow, we will not be able to staff all classes. It will not be possible to bring in sufficient supply teachers to cover classes, because so many supply staff are now self-isolating. Furthermore, we will have insufficient staff to adequately supervise the full student population (approximately 1,000 students) and ensure the health and safety of all. Having fewer students on site will also make social distancing easier, which is also an important consideration.

We are keeping school open for Years 10 & 11, as they are at a more important stage in preparing for external examinations, and for Year 7 as they are the youngest students. **Although students in Years 8 & 9 will not be in school, their education will continue at home. Students will be assigned work by their teachers via 'Frog'.** It is important that, where possible, parents support their child to ensure that they engage with the work. Frog support details are all on the Homepage of the school website.

If you are a Year 8 or 9 parent and are a key frontline worker in the NHS or emergency services, and would like your child to continue to attend school, please send your child in and ask him/her to report to Student Services (The Hive) at 8.30am each day. If you are a Year 8 or 9 parent and feel that your child would be vulnerable in some way by being at home, please contact school to discuss. If your child is in Year 8 or 9 and is entitled to a free school meal, it will be possible to collect a 'grab bag' from the bistro at 2.50pm each day. Access will be via the entrance near The Hive.

I realise that this does not give Year 8 and 9 parents much time to make arrangements for tomorrow. I apologise for this, but hope you appreciate that we are facing complex and challenging circumstances beyond our control. It is also a rapidly changing situation, so it is possible that further decisions will need to be made, either by the school or by the government. We will, of course, keep you updated if the situation changes.

Yours faithfully

Mrs H Phillips
Headteacher

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