

 Prittlewell Chase, Westcliff-on-sea, Essex SS0 0RT Headteacher: Tom Jackson-Owens

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2nd April 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Update regarding school closure during the coronavirus**

During this very unusual and unprecedented time I will write to parents regularly to update everyone on the latest school information, any changes to plans and any future plans.

I am sure that all parents are experiencing challenges that have not been faced before as isolation and social distancing are in place. These are times where there are many uncertainties ahead.

1. **School closure**

Parents will be aware of the Governments advice, which clearly says

*“Stay at home, only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home), stay 2 metres away from other people at all times, wash your hands as soon as you get home and do not meet others, even friends or family.”*

The Department for Education website also states

*“We have asked parents to keep their children at home wherever possible and for schools to*

*remain open only for those children of workers critical to the COVID-19 response who absolutely need to attend. It is important to underline that schools remain safe places for children, but the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, will*

*protect the NHS and save lives by reducing the risks of spreading the virus.”*

In light of this advice I have contacted parents who are key workers and parents who care for our most vulnerable students and all report that they have organised care for students over the Easter holidays.

I would like to thank parents for organising this care, as I am now able to close the school for the Easter break. This means that we are all doing our best to follow the Government’s advice.

1. **Opening date**

At the time of writing we have no date when school will be open properly again. I am in daily contact with the Department for Education and with Jackie Mullan, the Executive Head teacher of the Southend Special schools. As soon as I know more about this I will write to inform parents. We will follow the Government’s advice at all times and we will open when it is safe for everyone.

1. **Possible plan from 20th April**

One possibility might be that we open from 20th of April for students whose parents are key workers and for vulnerable students. If this is to happen, I will let all parents know and I’ll also contact the families of these students.

Any provision we are able to offer will depend on how many staff are able to be safely in school and I will carry out a daily risk assessment to work this out.

1. **Safeguarding**

I have added a safeguarding addendum to the website and this describes how we are safeguarding students and staff during this period of school closure.

1. **Communication**

I will post information on the website and through Facebook and I will also send out letters to all parents by post during this period.

1. **Residential trips**

All planned residential trips have now been cancelled and will only be re-considered if and when it is safe to run such activities.

1. **Free school meals**

The parents of students entitled to free school meals have been contacted by Natalie Bambridge, our Finance Officer, and have been sent vouchers for this week’s lunches. If you have any queries about this, please email me.

I can be contacted by any parent at any time through email and the address is

head@lancaster.southend.sch.uk

Parents can contact me on my school mobile phone in an emergency and the number is

07900 – 366710 (emergency calls only please)

Please take very good care of yourselves and be safe at all times. I hope to see you before too long.

Warmest regards,



Tom Jackson-Owens

Head teacher