

Dear parents and carers,

Following Mr Sibley's letter earlier today to all STAR MAT schools I thought it would be helpful to provide some further Sherburn High School specific information

Re: School Closure due to Coronavirus

Yesterday the government announced that after school on Friday, all schools across the country will be closing, except for a small group of students. It is not yet known when the school will be re-opening, but families will need to prepare themselves for the possibility that we may not be open until next September. In spite of closure, Sherburn High School will remain at the heart of the community and be here to help in many ways.

In this letter, I want to cover a number of important issues, but I would like to reassure you that further, more detailed information will be sent out on specific areas before the end of the week.

The school will be open for the children of key workers

The Education Secretary Gavin Williamson announced that schools will continue to stay open for the children of key workers. This means that we need to identify, as soon as possible, which families this applies to.

It is vital that this information is collected as quickly as possible, therefore I am asking that if you believe you fall into this category you complete the linked questionnaire as soon as possible, but no later than 9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

As you can imagine, given that school will be open from Monday we have very limited time for planning our provision.

Vulnerable children

The Secretary of State also said that schools should also continue to provide places for other vulnerable students. At the moment this includes students with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) and children who have a social worker. We will be contacting families to whom this applies directly to discuss this further.

Examinations and other issues relating to our Year 11 and Year 13 cohorts

I am sorry to have to inform you, that Gavin Williamson also announced that examinations would be cancelled in May and June. I know how disappointed our students are by this announcement, especially as we don't have clarity yet about how grades will be awarded.

Students have been working incredibly hard and shown such positive effort and attitude to their learning and revision. The government is determined to ensure that students are recognised for their hard work through the qualification system, and Sherburn High will do everything in its power to make sure that students gain the grades they deserve. We are in a fortunate position; Year 11 students have done three Pre-Public Examinations and our sixth form assessment system provides robust assessment information should it be required.

Today and tomorrow, I will also be talking to year 11 students about an end of year assembly, hoodies, and the prom. We have really valued this cohort of students, and want

to ensure that they do not miss out on any of the experiences that are part and parcel of being a Sherburn High School student.

Mr Kirby will be meeting with our Year 13s and a separate letter will also be sent to parents/carers/guardians of this year group.

Home Learning

Even though the school will be closed, we will still have very high expectations of our students, and our staff will continue to provide a high-quality education, albeit through remote learning. Tomorrow, I will send a detailed letter about how this will work.

We are well aware that if this situation continues for an extended period of time, remote learning will be very challenging, especially if the government further limits social contact. Continuing to get plenty of exercise, and spending quality time together away from computer screens, will be very important, above all we want to ensure that students' well-being remains of paramount importance. I hope that our approach to Home Learning strikes an appropriate balance but please, be reassured that we will continue to review our provision.

Free School Meals and other support

If your child receives Free School Meals, we have put plans in place to ensure that entitlement to meals continues to be provided. I will be contacting you directly before we close on Friday.

We are also very aware that some families will face significant financial difficulties as a result of the current crisis. If your family is placed in a situation where you feel you need additional support, please don't hesitate to contact your child's House Achievement Leader, so that we can explore how the school may be able to support you. Any information you give us will be treated with total confidentiality.

Finally, I want to emphasise that the school may be closing, but the staff at Sherburn High School are still very much here to ensure that our children continue to learn, stay safe, and stay happy. "Team Sherburn" remains strong and we thank you for the messages of support and offers of help we've received.

In these difficult and confusing times, I hope you manage to stay safe and well,

With thanks,

Miriam Oakley
Headteacher