

COVID-19 Update 18 March 2020 3.00pm

Dear

Thank you for all your messages of support and gratitude for the clarity of communication.

We have been doing our best to keep the school day as normal as possible. However, this is becoming increasingly difficult for a number of reasons.

We no longer have enough hand sanitiser to be able to provide coverage for the full school. We will be unable to fully clean all areas of the school because of the number of cleaning staff who are in self-isolation. Finally, and more significantly, under the new guidance of who should self-isolate for 14 days we will have a significant number of staff undertaking self-isolation throughout the school from across the Senior Leadership Team, Support Staff and Classroom teachers.

This means that we cannot operate Balshaw's as normal and be able to adequately safeguard and educate the whole school population. However, *we do not want to close the school.*

Actions from Thursday 19th March:

Therefore we are taking the following actions for partial school closure with effect from tomorrow (Thursday 19th March):

- School will only be open to Year 11 students.
- For all students who receive Free School Meals we have made arrangements for this and we will contact you separately.
- For **parents working within the NHS or providing wider essential emergency service support** the school will remain open for supervised learning. Given the catering pressures, we will be asking students to bring their own packed lunch. If you fit this category, please will you send an email to: partialclosure@balshaws.org.uk explaining your role and so that we know who to expect in school so that we can inform you if they don't arrive.

Why are we doing this?

By doing this:

- We can reduce the area of the school that is in use to ensure that we can thoroughly clean the school at the end of each day.
- We will be able to staff all Year 11 classes so that they can continue with learning and examination assessments.
- We will be able to staff the supervised learning of those other students who attend because their parents are part of the essential emergency care support services.
- We will be able to conduct dynamic risk assessments to see if the school can be opened to other year groups dependent upon staffing.

If there are further changes to this position, we will let you know.

Contact with School with Subject Queries or Safeguarding Concerns:

The list of staff emails are available on my previous newsletters and will be sent out again for parents soon. If you have any subject queries please email your child's teacher and they will endeavour to get back to you during school hours with in two working days (if they are not unwell). Similarly, if you have any safeguarding concerns, please email or phone to speak to someone during school hours as we will still be operating as normally as possible. Outside of school hours if you have any safeguarding concerns then contact Children's Social Care (0300 623 6720) or ring the Police on 101.

Remote Learning:

We have had to update the link for our Remote Learning because of the level of demand. The new link is:

https://balshawspreston-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/balshawsremotelearn_balshaws_org_uk/ElszkTD5YuxDgvo15-v6YksB3XCV-KugvjcUYevVsXsv1w?e=hxEtic

Your support:

Thank you again for all your messages of support – they really have been helpful at this time. I hope, as I said in my previous email, that you will try your best to turn this time of isolation into an opportunity and for those of you of faith, please continue to pray.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Steven Haycocks