

March 20<sup>th</sup> 2020

Dear parents/Carers

For many of us, if not all, this is a very strange day. Never before have we been closing school to the vast majority of students without knowing when we will be able to return to anything like normal. This morning we have done our best to mark the end of normal schooling with Year 11 and hopefully later today we will have more clarity on how their qualifications will be awarded.

The vast majority of students will be spending increased time on line over the next few weeks and months as they are at home and I would ask that you remind your sons and daughters of the importance of e-safety. There are many links to support this on the school website.

It is important that our young people recognise the seriousness of the situation we are all in and are reminded that they need to play their part in social distancing or isolation. This will be a challenge for all of us but especially young people who will inevitably find it difficult to be apart from their friends, not see grandparents, not have the normal routines of life etc.

Overnight the Government published its list of key workers whose children can still have access to school, if there is no alternative, during this crisis so that parents can go to work. The list is quite extensive but I would like to quote the start of the guidance: *'the most recent scientific advice on how to further limit the spread of COVID-19 is clear. **If children can stay safely at home, they should, to limit the chance of the virus spreading.** That is why the government has asked parents to keep their children at home, wherever possible, and asked schools **to remain open only for those children who absolutely need to attend.** It is important to underline that schools, colleges and other educational establishments remain safe places for children. But the fewer children making the journey to school, and the fewer children in educational settings, the lower the risk that the virus can spread and infect vulnerable individuals in wider society. Schools are, therefore, being asked to continue to provide care for a limited number of children - **children who are vulnerable and children whose parents are critical to the Covid-19 response and cannot be safely cared for at home.**'*

For those children who absolutely cannot stay at home safely and need to be in school then it is important that you contact school to let us know so that appropriate staffing can be planned. Students will not be taught but will have access to computers to complete the work their peers are doing at home. School hours will be the normal 8.50-3.10. Students do not need to wear uniform but they should also bring some trainers, shorts and t-shirt so that we can do some exercise with them. I would ask that students bring a packed lunch unless they are on free school meals in which case sandwiches and a drink will be provided. School buses will run as normal just on Monday so that we can gauge transport needs.

For those families who are in receipt of free school meals we are currently making arrangements with the local authority and it is likely that next week food boxes will be available. We will send out details to the families concerned directly.

I would like to thank all the staff here at Carr Hill for the remarkable way in which they have responded to this crisis and we will have a skeleton staff in school to support the children of those families who need to be in school.

We will keep in touch over the coming weeks so please do continue to check emails and the school website. In the meantime I hope that all of you and your loved ones stay safe during this difficult time.

Best wishes

Andrew Waller

Headteacher