

Dear Parents

First and foremost I hope that this letter finds you and your family in good health. I hope you are managing to stay safe and well at this difficult time.

I am writing to you at the end of what has been, without doubt, the most extraordinary term in school that I can remember. None of us could ever have imagined that the current situation would take hold as quickly as it has, forcing such drastic action to be taken at a national level. We have responded as a school to do everything possible to support our students, families and community, finding our way through what are uncharted waters for us all. I have been grateful and truly humbled by the support shown from our whole school community – our staff, Governors, students and families. Thank you for your understanding and your patience as we continue to put plans in place to support the education and wellbeing of our students and families during this period of school closure.

I thought that it would be helpful to share an update, covering key aspects of how the school will operate going forward.

#### **Children attending school**

It is important to reinforce the purpose of the action that the government has taken:

***“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.”***

Thank you for following this advice and keeping your children safely at home. For the small number of children who are eligible to attend school, please ensure that your child continues to arrive to school on time so that we can monitor attendance promptly at the start of each day. Provision will continue through the spring break, with the exception of Good Friday and Easter Monday.

#### **Supporting your child’s learning at home**

We are currently in the process of establishing which families are able to access the internet at home. Thank you if you have replied to the text message sent out this week. We will follow up with any parents who have not replied to help us establish a full picture of coverage across our school community. This will enable us to better target resources for home learning.

Currently there are a wide range of online resources that can be accessed from our website. These links are being updated regularly to provide an even greater range of learning resources. Next term we will share a more focused plan to enable students to follow the content of the curriculum that they would have been studying in school on a weekly basis. We will prioritise Year 10 content, with other year groups following as soon as possible. Although many of the resources will rely on internet access, subject staff will do their best to provide direction for all students.

Students have also been provided with text books and other paper-based materials for households where internet access is not available. We plan to extend this offer for all Year 7-9 students in English and Maths next term and will communicate the details of this after the spring break.

The contact details of key curriculum staff are on the school’s website so that students and parents can request support or additional resources should this be required and I know that many of you

have already made good use of this channel of communication. Please do not hesitate to make contact during core school hours.

Please do what you can to encourage your child to continue to learn from home and maintain good routines and self-discipline during this period of school closure. However, we also understand the pressures that come with having your children at home in the current circumstances. Please do not feel pressured for your children to complete a specific number of hours of learning – I know that you will do what you feel is best for your own children at this time.

### **Free School Meals**

Those children who are eligible for Free School Meals and are still attending school can access their meal from the canteen as normal. For all other children eligible for Free School Meals, alternative arrangements have been implemented while we have been waiting for the government scheme to be put in place. You will be aware that every child who is eligible for Free School Meals and who is not attending school has received a £3.00 Tesco meal-deal voucher for each day of absence to the end of this week. I know that this may have presented difficulties for some of you and I thank you for your patience in understanding that the school had to respond and take action very quickly and with no notice.

Free school meals are not normally provided in the holidays but under these exceptional circumstances the local authority has decided to provide funding for this. Please note the weekly allowance for this is holiday provision is £11.50 per week (£2.30 per day). This has been agreed for all schools and colleges across Wirral. The government scheme for the provision of free school meals has only been announced this week and we will communicate how the school will implement this as soon as possible.

### **Safeguarding and Pastoral Support**

Arrangements have been put in place to support our most vulnerable children throughout the period of school closure. Key pastoral staff are continuing to support families by phone and are available should you have any queries or concerns. Contact details are on our website.

### **Contacting School**

Should you have any general questions or need to contact school during this period of closure, please telephone 0151 652 1574 during core school hours in term time and leave a voicemail if your call is not answered. You can also contact the school on [offices@birkenheadparkschool.com](mailto:offices@birkenheadparkschool.com).

### **Communication**

As you are aware, this period of school closure is indefinite. We simply do not know how long we may be asked to operate these new arrangements. We will keep you informed of any updates in the following ways:

School website: [www.birkenheadparkschool.com](http://www.birkenheadparkschool.com)

Text message service – please let us know if your contact details have changed

Social media:

Facebook: thebirkenheadparkschool

Twitter: BPSWirral

I would like to thank you for the support that you have shown to the staff at school in recent times. Although the school gates are currently closed to the vast majority of students, be in no doubt that we remain committed to providing support to you and your children throughout this period of closure. I look forward to the day when we can re-open the gates to all. In the meantime, please stay safe and let us know if there is anything that we can do to support you.

With very best wishes

Yours faithfully



**Mrs Johnson**  
**Headteacher**