



05 January 2021

Dear Parents

I hope that this letter finds you and your families safe and well. Following the government announcement last night, you will be aware that school is closed from today for the vast majority of students. I apologise for this lengthy letter but please find below some important information to support you during this time:

Children attending school

For those students eligible to attend school, the timings of the day and week remain exactly the same. As most teachers will be teaching remotely from home, students in school will join their normal timetabled lessons remotely from one of the IT rooms, supervised by support staff.

If your child is eligible to attend school, please ensure that they arrive on time. The canteen will remain open for students to access at lunch and break time, although menu choices will be restricted.

We ask for your support more than ever in ensuring that your child meets our expectations regarding behaviour and cooperation with staff during these difficult times. All control measures remain in place in school regarding social distancing, the wearing of face coverings and regular hand washing/sanitising.

If you are unsure whether your child is eligible to attend school, please contact your child's leader.

Supporting your child's learning at home

As you are aware, Microsoft TEAMS is now set up as the school's remote learning platform. **All students are expected to attend live lessons every day** and access class resources and homework through Microsoft TEAMS. This will mean that they do not miss out on learning and can follow the exact lessons and content that they would normally follow in school. It is our intention that students will also be able to attend their daily tutor time session very soon and we will inform you in the coming days as soon as this is available.

Please note that there is one change to the remote timetable which affects students in Year 7. Period 3 for Year 7 students will run from 11.35am – 12.35pm and will not be a split lesson. Lunch break for Year 7 will therefore be 12.35pm – 1.05pm.

Microsoft TEAMS can be accessed through a desktop, laptop or other electronic device and every student in school now has access to a device from home. Students have had guidance from teaching staff on how to log on to TEAMS and join lessons and we have produced a user guide on remote learning so that you are able to support from home. The user guide can be found on the Remote Learning section of the school website.

Please encourage your child to be up each day in time to join all lessons and continue to learn from home. Encouraging good routines and self-discipline is so important in ensuring that students retain the good habits of learning that have been established and will minimise any lost learning during this period of school closure.

Although we will do everything we can to ensure that lessons run as normal for all year groups, please note that there may be occasions when lessons may not take place if a member of teaching staff is unwell or unable to teach for other reasons.

If your child has any issues accessing remote lessons or you require any support, please contact your child's year leader in the first instance or Miss Clarke, Assistant Headteacher, on cla@birkenheadparkschool.com.

Free School Meals

Those children who are eligible for Free School Meals and will still be attending school can access their meal from the canteen as normal. For all other children eligible for Free School Meals, you will be aware that we have put in place alternative arrangements for this first week of term and will be in touch over the coming days to share the plans from next week onwards.

Safeguarding and Pastoral Support

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

Year 11/GCSE and BTEC exams

We are still awaiting guidance from the government regarding the summer exam series for Year 11 students and will provide further updates as soon as these are available. It is likely that some form of external assessment will still take place and therefore vital that Year 11 students continue to attend live lessons and study from home.

Support with careers advice and guidance for Year 11 students will continue. Ms Galer and Mrs Houghton will be available if you have any questions regarding college places for next year or other post-16 enquiries (contact details on our website).

Testing

The testing of secondary school students that was planned for the start of term in January will now be postponed. It is likely that this will be carried out at some point in February before students return to school. We will be in touch with further information when it is available.

Parents' evenings

You will be aware that parents' evenings were scheduled to take place on several dates during this term. Please note that these events have been postponed and we will be in touch with proposed new dates as soon as possible.

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.

Communication

As you are aware, this period of school closure is likely to last until at least February half-term. We will keep you informed of any updates via email and in the following ways:

School website: www.birkenheadparkschool.com

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

Social media: **Twitter** (BPSWirral), **Facebook** (thebirkenheadparkschool)

Guidance on Coronavirus

The latest guidance from the government on the national lockdown and coronavirus can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>.

I know that you will do all you can to follow this advice and guidance, keeping you and your families as safe as possible during these difficult times.

I would like to thank you for the support that you have shown to the staff at school, especially in recent times. We remain committed to providing support to you and your children throughout this period of closure.

With very best wishes.



Helen Johnson
Headteacher