



Mary Webb School & Science College, Pontesbury, Shrewsbury, Shropshire SY5 0TG

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18th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Notification of partial school closure

I am writing to inform of my decision to partially close Mary Webb School and Science College. This partial closure will affect the following year groups:

- Year 9
- Year 8
- Year 7

This closure will begin on Thursday 19th March 2020, which means if your child is in these year groups, you will be responsible for them during the school day from this date.

Year 10 and Year 11 students should attend school as normal, but this will be reviewed on a daily basis.

The reasons for this partial closure are twofold:

- There is currently a significant proportion of Mary Webb School and Science College teaching staff and support staff who need to self-isolate. This is the situation at present and will not decrease in the near future. I would like to assure any concerned parents/carers and students this is not due to the members of staff suffering from any symptoms, but due to the need for them to self-isolate, following government advice.
- The other reason is due to the high numbers of students already in self-isolation, either due to family members showing symptoms, or them showing symptoms themselves. These numbers will only increase over the next few days and therefore require me to take this pre-emptive course of action. These absences, largely due to self-isolation, will last for at least 14 days. The vast majority of absences are in Years 7 to 9.

In order to ensure the consistency, continuity and quality of education your child receives during this challenging time, I have deemed it necessary to take this course of action, with the full support of our local governing body and the CSAT Executive Principal.

This partial closure will take us to the Easter break, and beyond, with the earliest expected return to school for Years 7 to 9 being Monday 20th April 2020.

Safeguarding

I would encourage you to visit the following link to ensure you are informed of government advice relating to those groups of people the government consider to be particularly vulnerable to COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

If your child has any conditions listed in this guidance, it is suggested you keep them at home in order to reduce the risk of them contracting COVID-19. These conditions include asthma and diabetes. This advice is likely to be in place for some weeks.

As with all schools, there will be children and families who may be more vulnerable as a result of the current situation and the need to partially close the school. There will be members of staff assigned to keep in regular contact with these families and children in order to provide them with the support they need. Should you have any concerns about your child or a child who is known to you, you can report child protection and welfare concerns directly to Shropshire Council's 'First Point of Contact' (FPOC), using the following telephone number: 0345 678 9021.

Education and Learning

Your child will be provided with work by their class teacher, with ClassCharts being the main platform used to facilitate this work. Details regarding our educational provision, including expectations for our staff and your child are included in a separate document attached to this letter.

Some subject areas may utilise other online learning software, in addition to ClassCharts, in order to give the best provision possible. Form tutors have checked students have access to at least ClassCharts, but if you have concerns over your child's ability to access online materials, please ensure you contact us as soon as possible.

Free School Meals

If your child receives free school meals, we will ensure there is continuity of this provision, once we receive guidance from the government on their national strategy for this. As soon as we know more in relation to this, we will update all families this affects.

Events, trips and other enrichment activities or parental engagement evenings

From now, until after the Easter break, all additional activities, trips and events, including after school clubs, will be postponed or cancelled. Where refunds are due, we will aim to get these processed and issued by the start of the summer term.

For activities, trips and events, including after school clubs currently scheduled in the summer term, we will review their viability, following guidance and advice nearer the time. For significant residential trips, such as those to London and France, we will provide further information as soon as we have it. At this stage, due to when they are currently scheduled, no direction has been issued to cancel them. We do not want to be too quick to cancel them and will only do so when we can be sure it is absolutely necessary and have some certainty in relation to refunds.

Further information updates and contact

As you can all appreciate, with daily briefings from the Prime Minister, there may be a need to update or change the advice we give or to respond to new directions from the government, at short notice. We aim to update our website, in the '**Latest News**' tab, as often as possible, to help keep you informed.

You will be aware we recently sent home copies of your contact information in order to ensure we have the means to contact you with letters, such as this one, as soon as possible. It is crucial you ensure we are informed as soon as is practically possible of any changes to your contact details, so we can keep you informed of any developments.

There is a lot I have covered in this letter to you. Should you have any questions or queries about any aspects in it, please contact the person you would normally get in touch with at school. However, due to the high levels of concern there may be in the local community in relation to this developing situation, I am more than happy for you to contact me directly using the following email address: **headteacher@marywebbschool.com**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of our school community on their approach to this rapidly developing situation. Students and staff are remaining calm and pragmatic in their approach and the response from parents/carers has been overwhelmingly supportive. Please continue to contact the school, should you have further queries about the situation and keep monitoring our '**Latest News**' tab on the school website for further announcements.

Yours sincerely

Mr P J Lowe-Werrell
Headteacher

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