

Dear Varndean families

Coronavirus update 25th March

My colleagues and I have found your regular and supportive feedback over the last few days very helpful and motivational - thank you. Both staff and students are realising that remote learning is very different to the normal classroom experience and we plan to send a survey to all families next week to find out what is working well and how we might be able to tweak our plans to better support you at home.

Based on this feedback we have pulled together some top tips to share with you about what is working well. These are included in our first weekly newsletter which you can read here. [Click here for the newsletter](#) As we settle into a new routine our aim is to update you weekly via this newsletter which will contain all the information you need to keep your children learning and developing while school is closed.

Included in the newsletter will be links to the weekly "virtual" assembly. This weekly update from your child's Deputy Head of School aims to help them see what is happening elsewhere and continue to feel connected to their school community. The newsletter will also build on the information we shared on Monday about the ways in which we can support wellbeing and personal development.

We have remained open this week for the children of key workers and those who are vulnerable. Numbers have reduced following the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday but the provision will continue and I am liaising with the Local authority and other schools to establish how we will approach the Easter holidays. We are also developing some "holiday" materials for all students to try and support families during this period. More detail on these two aspects will follow shortly.

Monday's announcement enforced a change on how we intended to ensure children entitled to a free school meal received a lunch each day. We have written to all eligible families this afternoon collecting some information. If you have not received this message or it raises questions for you please contact Andy Roberts andyroberts@varndean.co.uk .

Some parents have been asking about Enrichment week and payment schedules for activities and residentials planned for July. Anxiety on this issue is understandable but it is prudent to delay a decision about these trips a little longer until the picture regarding travel is clearer. Therefore please do not make any new payments and we will finalise our decision on Enrichment during the week beginning 20th April 2020.



Although we are not in school the school continues to function and to do so as normally as possible. Do please continue to contact my colleagues in the way you normally would to support your child/children.

Lenin is quoted as saying “there are decades when nothing happens and there are weeks where decades happen”. How true that seems at the moment. I hope that you and your family stay safe and well in the coming weeks.

Kind regards

Gareth Hughes
Acting Headteacher