



Dear Varndean families

Coronavirus update 3rd April

As the Easter holiday approaches I think it is fair to say that we are coming to the end of the initial phase of school closure. This has been a period when we have acted to ensure student, staff and community safety and done what we can to enable some learning to continue. Everything has felt new and collectively we have had to find a way through uncharted territory.

It is now fairly clear that the current circumstances will continue well past the end of these holidays and so the next half term will be a period of adjustment to this new way of being. Plans about learning and pastoral care will need to be fleshed out so that schooling can continue during an unprecedented period of school closure.

I think we are well placed for this and our latest [newsletter](#) gives you a clear view of our direction of travel and outlines how we can work together for the best of your children. They have an entitlement to learning but of course that learning may need to look very different when they only have access to their teachers remotely. Our commitment is to continue to develop the most effective ways we can to do this and I am grateful to families for the patience and resilience they have shown while we have moved this forward.

With this in mind if you haven't yet completed our parent survey then please do so by following this link: [Click here for the survey](#)

While I have been writing this letter the Department for Education has published further detail about how grades will be awarded to year 11 students this summer. Part of this guidance is a letter offering reassurance to year 11 students which can be read [here](#). Once we have processed the guidance we will distill it for families early next week.

As we rise to the challenge of the next half term a break from school work will be important for staff and students alike. My colleagues will not be setting learning tasks over the holidays but we have provided some suggestions for activities that may stimulate and entertain your children over the holidays. You can see this list [here](#) and I hope you find it useful. We will continue to add ideas over the holidays.

We have been pleased to be able to support our students entitled to free school meals during this crisis. We welcomed the long awaited announcement this week of the national voucher scheme which we have signed up for which will ensure our most vulnerable families continue to



access this entitlement. If you are one of these families and have a question about this provision then please do contact Andy Roberts andyroberts@varndean.co.uk

We have confirmed our provision for the Easter holidays for vulnerable children and those from key worker families. Thank you to those parents who have informed us of the need for their child to attend. If you are in one of these categories and your circumstances change then please do contact Abi Holder abigailholder@varndean.co.uk so that we can try and accommodate your needs.

Our pastoral staff will also be taking a well earned break over Easter, however our safeguarding lead Vicky Anstiss can be contacted vickyanstiss@varndean.co.uk Please do remind yourselves of the other sources of support that are available for your family at this time. [Flyer whilst schools are shut.196176882.pdf](#)

And please do remind your children about internet safety at a time when their screen time might be higher than usual. <https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/advice-centre/parents-and-carers>

Please don't forget you can find all of our previous correspondence on our website [here](#).

The sun is going to shine to start the Easter holidays but in some ways it has never felt less like Spring. Mr O'Sullivan and the students in school this week wrote a song - "The coronavirus blues" which had a call to arms, reminding us that we can only beat the virus and the blues by working together. So very true.

Thank you for your continued support and best wishes to you and your family for a restful and healthy Easter.

Kind regards

Gareth Hughes
Acting Headteacher