

Tuesday 17th March 2020



Bluecoat Beechdale
Academy

Belong, Believe, Achieve

Dear Parent / Carers,

Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19) update

As I am sure you are aware, the UK Government's guidance on the coronavirus (COVID-19) has changed the status from the 'contain' to 'delaying' phase. Please be assured we are taking all of the necessary steps in response to this in order to protect our community and are continuing to follow official guidance from the Nottingham Local Authority, Public Health England and the UK Government.

ACADEMY REMAINS OPEN

The Academy remains open, which is the current official guidance we have been given. However, we have taken a number of precautionary measures to Students who are being reminded about the importance of good hygiene, particularly washing hands with soap and water more regularly than they would normally. To provide infection control, cleaning arrangements within the Academy have been further enhanced. This includes additional cleaning of regularly touched surfaces.

EXPECTATION ON ATTENDANCE

All staff and students should continue to attend the Academy as normal unless they develop a high temperature and/or a new continuous cough. If they do, they should remain at home for 7 days. They should not be out of the house or meeting with friends; where they are well, they should be working throughout at home. The current advice is that you should not visit a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital. However, should the condition worsen; does not improve after 7 days; or the person is unable to cope with the symptoms then Public Health England should be contacted via 111.

If your child feels unwell on the Academy premises then we will contact you in the normal way to arrange collection. Therefore, if you have recently changed your contact details, please inform the Academy office as soon as possible. We have a number of students who have pre-existing medical conditions which make them more vulnerable to the risk of viral infection. Consequently, if your child is displaying any of the symptoms identified by Public Health England please let us know.

THE POSSIBILITY OF SCHOOL CLOSURE

The Academy will only close if we are told to do so by the government, or if we do not have enough staff to operate safely. However, be assured that I am working with the rest of the leadership team to prepare for this scenario. In the event of staffing shortages I may need to enact a partial closure to some year groups. A partial closure would be solely based on staffing, and will be at short notice so please ensure you check emails, text messages or Parentmail App. In this scenario the Academy will open to GCSE groups as a priority.

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Archway Learning Trust
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In the event of a full Academy closure ordered by central government, it is likely that staff will not be able to attend the Academy site and therefore we will need to be able to operate remotely to communicate with the school community. Our staff are busily preparing materials to support distance learning should there be a forced partial/full closure. We will communicate this to students and provide additional materials, which will appear on our website too. This is particularly relevant for students about to take their exams in the summer.

Our examinations team is working closely with the examination regulator, and examination boards to receive the most up-to-date guidance. All year 11 students will receive a bespoke pack of work to ensure they continue to learn at such an important time in their schooling. Please keep in mind that we are only sending out this information to help the school community prepare. As it stands, there are currently no plans to close.

THURSDAY ENRICHMENT

Thursday enrichment for year 7 students will continue to run at present. However, if the staffing of these sessions becomes a problem, we will have no choice but to cancel. If this is the case, we will provide childcare for those students who need it until 3.00pm.

SCHOOL TRIPS

The advice from the government is that foreign trips are 'not advised'. School trips within the UK are being considered a risk, particularly when an Academy trip would involve meeting or being around large groups of 'new' people, not in a student's normal social/school grouping. Each trip's risk assessment will be considered individually before a decision is made about it going ahead.

I appreciate that this is a worrying time for everyone. If you haven't already, then I would encourage you to talk to your child(ren) about the coronavirus. [BBC Newsround](#) provides regular updates which may be helpful for younger children and [YoungMinds](#) provides practical steps for older children to help cope with anxiety. I wish to express my sincere thanks to our incredible staff who are preparing for any eventuality. I would also like to thank you for your continued support and understanding during this extremely challenging time.

Yours faithfully

Mrs S Bailey

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