

19th March, 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

Following previous communications from the Academy and the Trust, I write to outline our provision to ensure that SBL Academy provides continuity of education for your daughter/son in this time of difficulty. With the situation changing rapidly on a daily basis, we will endeavour to keep you updated, however, I must stress how important it is for you as parents and carers to keep up to date with the Government information.

From 12.25pm (end of Period 3) tomorrow 20th March, the school will be closed. We will of course still be able to provide some services for our families and community including the distribution of free school meals to eligible children and the provision of education for all of our students via our online services. In addition, as a Trust we are looking at how we can provide education for those students who have parents and carers who are part of the front-line services or meet the criteria as set out later today. We are looking forward to being able to continue to serve our community.

As the school closes, the following procedure will apply to ensure continuity of education:

- Our well-established online learning resources for students means that SBL is well placed to provide continuity of learning. Through Insight and our Google resources we will be able to set work and share resources for learning to take place online. To prepare for this, it would be wise to check that any login credentials that you or your child will need, are working from home.
- Students will be expected to follow their usual timetable.
- Teachers will set learning tasks via Insight.
- Teachers will endeavour to provide a balance of learning activities so that pupils do not have too much screen time.
- Yr 7-9 students will complete the activities online where possible, or in books we will provide them with.
- Yr 10 and 12 students will use their books/folders or online as appropriate.
- Students are expected to complete assignments as directed.
- If your daughter/son's teacher is ill or indisposed, we will endeavour to ensure that learning tasks are uploaded and accessible as quickly as possible. We may also provide longer activities/projects to be completed over a number of lessons.
- Please note: the majority of activities will be self-marked by the student and the plan is to start each lesson with a recap/opportunity to mark their work.

We ask you to ensure that, wherever possible, your child has a quiet place to work. We recommend that students also use time from PE lessons, to keep their exercise and physical activity levels high where possible following Government guidelines.

For students taking public examinations, these have been cancelled for both Year 11 and Year 13. I led an assembly for our Year 11 students this morning and was amazed that out of a cohort of 132, over 100 were in school. We have reassured them that they will not be disadvantaged by this. Mr White ran assembly for Years 12 and 13 and said the same. We know that you will be as anxious as they are, but be assured that when we know more, we will share with you about how this will work. In the meantime, I explained how important it is that students continue to work to avoid dropping back. We will continue to put relevant lessons on the system to ensure they are well prepared for Post-16 or apprenticeships. This will, in the next few weeks transition so that they can follow the courses that students intend to choose Post-16 with us. If they intend to go elsewhere, contact that provider for learning opportunities, but be assured that we are here for our students and will support in any way we can.

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We will continue to email information out to you all and post on our website over the coming months and will respond to your queries where possible. My staff have been incredible in these difficult times and have given the stability to our young people that they have needed and you should be able to expect from your school. We are one of the few schools that has been able to remain open to all its students: I am immensely proud of this and it's a fantastic reflection on students, staff and our community. We will have short assemblies tomorrow to share more information regarding expectations and support. I will also talk to students about what to expect in the months to come and how important their role in society is at this time.

Tomorrow will be a non-uniform day. We will end the day at 12.25pm, but if you require your child to stay with us until 3.05pm, please can you call our reception and we will make arrangements. Students who are in receipt of free-school meals will be able to collect them at the end of P3. It has been arranged that the school bus will collect students at 12.25 pm. ***If your child has been isolating as part of your family unit, is ill with any of the symptoms or anyone in your family is ill, they must NOT come into school. Please ensure you follow Government advice and are socially responsible.***

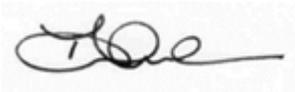
We know that this is an unsettling time. I would urge you to follow the advice as laid out by our Government and model this to your children. We will put together a more comprehensive booklet in order to support, but this will take time in response to Government information.

We are all looking forward to welcoming our students back whenever that may be and will keep lines of communication open. Please stay safe.

In the meantime, should you wish to make us aware of any pastoral or safeguarding concerns please do so via our normal email address which will be regularly monitored.

As I have said, this is the most challenging issue we have had to face in our lifetime. Your children have been amazing over the last few weeks. I would also like to thank you for your continued support at this challenging time – do contact us if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely



D Anderson
Principal