

18th March 2020

Dear King's Student,

A lot of information has been sent to your parents/carers recently but I wanted to write to you directly as well regarding the current situation we are in with the coronavirus and how it is affecting our school community.

A government decision today means that we will be closed to most students at the end of this week. It is likely that we will remain open to you if you are children of keyworkers, and in certain other groups, and parents/carers will be notified of arrangements for this partial opening. The government have taken this decision to close schools to slow the spread of the virus and protect the most vulnerable people in our communities. They have also now made clear that GCSE exams will not take place in May and June as planned. They have not yet made clear how Year 11 students will be assessed this year and when that will happen and I appreciate that this news will be very unsettling and upsetting for our Year 11 students.

I know that many of you have been anxious about this virus. Some of you might welcome the time off school (!) initially but I expect that as the closures continue you will start to feel bored and frustrated that your learning has been interrupted, especially as we had earlier interruptions this academic year due to site issues.

I want you to know that your teachers, and all the staff at King's, understand your anxieties and frustrations. These are unfamiliar times for all of us and the constant headlines and uncertainties can be overwhelming. I would urge you to remember that for most people the COVID-19 virus causes mild symptoms only and the vast majority of people fully recover. Scientists around the world are working hard on a vaccine and cases in China are now right down to the extent they have closed their last dedicated coronavirus hospital. The UK will get through this very difficult period; I hope that you, like me, have taken comfort and inspiration from seeing the whole world pull together and take drastic action to protect the most vulnerable. Try to see the positive side of spending more time at home, in small social groups, with a slower pace of life. I would urge you not to spend vast amounts of time on social media. Instead look to the things you can do to support your mental health and look after others: walking, running and spending time outside on your own or with your family; reading; playing games; helping your parents and carers with jobs at home; calling elderly relatives; baking and preparing food for your family; taking time to pray and connect with God or meditate quietly, etc.

We will be doing our very best to support you with your learning while the school is closed. Please be reassured that teachers are certainly not viewing this as a "holiday". We are at work whether the school is open or not and we will be setting you work carefully to progress your learning.

I am praying for you all at the moment: for your health, for your families, for your learning and for your personal wellbeing.

Thank you for working with us during this challenging time – we are very proud to call you our students.

Best wishes,

Mrs Price
Headteacher