



17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

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Dear Parents/Guardians

Regrettably, due to increasing staff absences brought about by recommended Coronavirus related isolations, we have taken the decision to **close school to students in Years 8,9,10 and 12 from tomorrow, Wednesday 18th March 2020.**

For students in **Years 7,11 and 13**, they should **attend school as usual tomorrow**, but school will be **closed to them from Thursday 19th March 2020.** The closures are currently until Easter, however we will communicate with you again before this time to confirm the position for week commencing 20th April when we hope to be able to welcome students back.

There are many areas that we need to make you aware of and to provide clarity on the continuation of learning during this closure. In order to make this as easy and as clear as possible, please see the information below:

### Learning from Home

Students will be set work for each lesson of the school day through the homework section of Edulink - this will be in line with their current school timetable. Students should access this in exactly the same way that they do for homework. The work that has been set will direct students to a variety of tasks; some may be Google Classrooms, some may use other on-line learning platforms such as Seneca, MyMaths or Language Perfect and some tasks may be research or worksheet based.

Our aim is to provide a variety of learning that is the most effective for all of our students throughout this difficult time. We feel it is important at this time to identify that this is a very different way of working for our staff and our students and patience and determination will be at the heart of making this a success.

Having completed the set learning for each period of the day, students will be able to indicate that this has been completed by clicking the 'submit' button. This will help students to manage their workload given the fact that their homework section of Edulink is going to have far more work in it than usual.

Rather than setting separate homework and lesson work tasks, teachers will adjust the length of time a task should take to incorporate both lesson time and the recommended homework timetables.

Feedback is a central part of learning. Not only does this provide our students with ways of improving but it also helps us to identify common misconceptions and is key to our lesson planning. This element of our teaching is going to be particularly challenging; we are aware of this and will do all we can to support the process and set tasks for which we can either provide feedback or that can be self-marked. It is important though to understand that whilst we will be marking specific pieces of work we will not be asking staff to deep mark all work completed.



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### **Student Illness/Injury**

If your child is unable to access the learning due to illness/injury and are unable to complete work, please use your own judgement to decide how much of the work they have missed can be completed once they are well again.

Senior staff with responsibility for the effectiveness of teaching and learning will be continually reviewing the on-line learning. The methods of learning outlined above may need to be amended if the period of school closure is extended or if significant numbers of staff and/or their families become affected by illness. The learning of Year 11 and Year 13 students may need to be prioritised due to external examinations.

### **Inhalers**

We are aware that there is some concern about children having sufficient inhalers, so if we hold a spare inhaler at school you may wish to come and collect this to have at home. Please ensure it is returned to us when the children are advised to return to school. The inhalers are stored in Reception and you can come to collect them between 8am-4.30pm on Wednesday 18th and Thursday 19th March 2020.

### **Website Support**

In order to support this we have a specific page of our website to provide information and guidance and to provide support in the event that students or parents are struggling to access any of our school systems - <https://www.arden.solihull.sch.uk/corona-virus/>

On this site you will find:

- Up to date information about Coronavirus
- Help and support about how to set up, access or change passwords for our online learning platforms
- Links to our Exams board list so that students in KS4 & KS5 can access past papers and mark schemes to support independent learning.
- For Year 11 students a link to a Google Site that lists the exam boards for each examined subject and a wide range of revision strategies & support - <https://sites.google.com/arden.solihull.sch.uk/year-11-revision-resources/home>
- Contact details for our ICT team (please only use once you have utilised all of the self help support) - the dedicated email account for this is:  
ardenictsupport@arden.solihull.sch.uk
- Most recent school communications relating to Coronavirus, school closure and updates

### **Communication of illness**

So that we can continue to monitor the ongoing situation of the health of our students, it is very important, even though we are in a state of forced closure, that you still inform us if your child becomes unwell or if you have confirmed/suspected Coronavirus in your household. This information will help us to monitor the situation as we near a time when we are able to consider reopening. We are obviously asking the same of our staff to ensure that we are well informed about the health of our school community.

Please continue to advise us via email [absence@arden.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:absence@arden.solihull.sch.uk) or using Edulink and provide the following:

- What illness/injury/symptoms the student has
- If the student has symptoms of suspected Coronavirus and hence in a period of self-isolation

- If any member of the household has symptoms and are self-isolating
- If the student has been diagnosed as having Coronavirus and is self-isolating.

Please may we remind you that we should all respect the confidentiality of others and refrain from discussing individuals, particularly over social media.

### **Communication**

We will continue to provide updates and strive to keep in touch as effectively as we can over the next two weeks; this will be via our normal school communications emails and any updates will also be posted on the school website. We very much appreciate that communication is a two way process and that you may well want to contact us. In the event that you do need to ask questions or contact the school or specific members of staff, please send your email to [office@arden.solihull.sch.uk](mailto:office@arden.solihull.sch.uk); a team of staff will be monitoring this email account and will either respond or forward your questions as efficiently as we can.

Once again we ask for your patience and consideration during this continually changing and challenging time. Whilst we are 100% committed to providing an excellent level of ongoing education and communication, we are in an unprecedented situation. Our staff will be working hard to fulfil their working responsibilities, but they will be working in difficult circumstances as they also manage their own childcare responsibilities, their own health and wellbeing and the needs of their wider family members.

### **Staying Healthy**

We are all inundated with advice about handwashing and being careful to not touch eyes, noses and mouths etc. Advice on this is available on our Coronavirus webpage of agencies that are available to look after our mental health. We feel this is very important given the fact that we are likely to face more time than we would ordinarily in isolation.

### **Student Support**

Increased time together as families and a lack of our normal routine is in itself can be unsettling and disruptive. We are trying to support some semblance of normality through the setting of work. We do identify that for some students an extended period of time without school is of a concern, given the stability and consistency that school provides. We have signposted all students to our 'Support' link on our website; we would like to also make you aware of this - <https://sites.google.com/a/arden.solihull.sch.uk/support-button/>

This link enables students to access members of our Pastoral Team to discuss worries or concerns that they may have.

### **Impact on External Examinations**

We know that students and parents/guardians will be worried about what will happen with the summer exams; Ofqual is advising all schools to prepare for the summer exams as usual and we are awaiting further guidance from the DfE and the exam boards. We will continue to communicate with you as soon as we have further information.

Thank you for your support in this matter. We know that you and our students will do all you can to limit the impact of the forced closure on learning. We will continue to do all we can to support you and our students through this period. Please take good care of yourselves and those in your local community. We very much look forward to seeing all students back in school in the near future.

Yours sincerely



**Mr D Warwood**  
Associate Headteacher