



Brine Leas School

An Academy

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Subject: Coronavirus Update 19.3.20 #1

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm sure that you will have seen the announcements from Gavin Williamson and Boris Johnson yesterday. We saw them at the same time, so we are still digesting the contents of the announcements and awaiting the detail that will give us some answers. We can only tell you what we know at this stage. What I can tell you is that my staff have worked incredibly hard to keep your children safe in the past few weeks and they will continue to do everything possible to support them in the coming weeks and months. What we are actually able to achieve will very much depend on the national response and the resources available.

School Closure

School is closed to children from the end of Friday 20th March 2020. There will be some provision put into place to support those children with EHCPs, Looked After Children, Previously Looked After Children, children subject to Child Protection and Child in Need measures, together with the children of parents designated as key or critical workers. How this will work and who it applies to is still unclear, but we are hoping for some kind of clarity today or tomorrow.

Public Examinations

All qualifications, including GCSEs and A Levels, will not have examinations this summer. I've just had to deliver heart-breaking assemblies to Year 11s and Year 13s to tell them that their last day in school for this academic year is tomorrow and that the examinations and assessments that we had all been preparing for are not going ahead. There are some very emotional children and staff in school.

On the notion of it being the 'last day' for Year 11s and 13s, we are planning to hold whatever celebrations we can muster with one days' notice. They will then be free to leave school at lunchtime.

What the government puts in place to decide how these students are recognised and qualified is still being decided. Please be assured that we will do everything possible to support them on to their next destination after Year 11 and Year 13 and that all of the same jobs, apprenticeships, college and sixth form places and university places will still be there at the end of this.

For those students in other year groups who were due to sit formal examinations this summer, they are also cancelled. We will contact those families and students separately in due course.

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Critical Workers

Many schools, including ourselves and Malbank have already been asking those of you that work in frontline services who you are so that we can work out how to support you in the next few weeks. Before it became an official consideration yesterday, most of my staff had already volunteered to do whatever we can to help those families and we will continue to do so. While we have technically been added to the key worker category by the Government, it doesn't change what we do or want to do to support those people who are actually at the frontline supporting and caring for us all in the coming weeks and months. Thank you and you have our full support.

Friday 20th March 2020

I still currently have a significant staff shortage and therefore tomorrow goes ahead as per the plan issued yesterday. That is that Years 8 and 9 are studying from home and the resources are available online for them. For all other students, school is open tomorrow, and we will attempt school business in the most normal way possible.

As soon as I know more, I will send another update.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'David Cole'.

David Cole
Headteacher