



30<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parents / Carers

As we move into week 2 I hope that you and your families are well and that you are managing to stay healthy during these turbulent times. We are really missing the pupils and 'normal' school, but are grateful for your support with social distancing to ensure as many people as possible stay virus free. By Friday we only had 5 children in school which really helps with our effort to keep pupils and staff safe.

This is also a good opportunity for me to thank you for all of the messages of support we have received over recent weeks, they really are appreciated and, although we might not have replied to each one, they are all shared with staff and have helped to keep spirits high.

As is becoming our new way of working, I wanted to write to you with some updates:

### **The In-school Team**

With such small numbers in school it has allowed me to reduce staff on-site to the bare minimum for additional safety against the spread of the virus. We now have 1 member of leadership on site, Mr Sommerwille (our chef), 1 administrator and 2 site team. I would like to thank them for all their efforts so far. I would also like to reassure the families of the children we are caring for that our 'small school' provision will continue over the Easter break, including bank holidays (but not weekends).

### **Pupils working at home**

Thank you to everyone who has provided feedback about the home working arrangements. This is a totally new way of working for us and we always welcome feedback so please keep letting us know how it is going at home. We have enjoyed seeing the work your children are producing so please keep sharing this with us, using the function to submit work on Show My Homework. Staff will continue to be on-line daily to support with any queries.

We are also aware that it is easy for pupils (and parents) to be overwhelmed at this time and it is important we consider wellbeing. With this in mind, we are encouraging pupils to spend time cooking, exercising, socialising (virtually!) with friends and helping around the house and garden.

### **Communication with school**

During the school closures, there will be times when the school office is not staffed. Please try and communicate using email wherever possible ([office@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk](mailto:office@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk)) and the most appropriate member of staff will get back to you. We will check phone messages daily.

### **Year 11 / 13**

I have written to all parents / carers of pupils in Year 11 and 13 in relation to their grades and will continue to provide updates as the exam boards release more information. Please can I request that you do not contact the school with enquiries about individual grades at the moment, we are not in a position to offer any clarity regarding this at the moment.

### **Dinner Money Balances - Parents using Parent Pay**

I can confirm that unspent dinner money balances over £5 will be returned to your ParentPay account automatically, without the need for you to make an individual request. To help our staff cope at this challenging time, we would ask that you do not make individual requests to the school unless you have an outstanding query with your child's account. Once your refund has been processed you should

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receive an alert from ParentPay to inform you that you have been credited, at which point you will have the option to withdraw your funds back to the original account used to make payment. We are aiming for all ParentPay balances to be refunded by 7th April 2020 at the latest.

#### **Educational Visits Balances**


Please be advised that all overseas visits due to take place this academic year will not be able to go ahead, a full refund will be issued. With respect to UK visits we are in the process of clarifying which trips remain unable to proceed prior to providing full refunds. Given the volume of transactions, coupled with the disruption caused by the closures, we are unable at this point to provide a definitive timeline for when refunds will be made but we are prioritising refunds in trip date order and we aim to fully refund all parents for trips by the end of April 2020. We fully understand that many families will be impacted financially by the current situation so we will work to return payments as quickly as possible before this date but please do contact us if you have concerns.

#### **Provision of Free School Meals**

We have set up a voucher scheme and eligible families should have received a text message or email about this. If you have not received this information and you believe you should have done, please let us know. We expect the vouchers to be issued for the beginning of this week, if you need support sooner than this, then please contact the school by emailing [office@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk](mailto:office@worcs.tgacademy.org.uk). Some families may be facing loss of income and may now be in the process of applying for support. Please contact us if you are in this situation and you feel you may be eligible to free school meal support.

Thank you again for your on-going support. Stay safe and keep up the great work with supporting the national effort to address this current crisis.

Yours sincerely



Mr D Butler