

17th March 2020

Dear Parents & Carers

**Coronavirus**  
**BCCS Partial School Closure**  
**From and including Weds 18th March**

**Closed to:**               **Years 7, 8, 9, 10, 12**

**Open to:**               **Years 11 and 13**

**Open to:**               **Students whose parents are front line NHS/emergency services staff who are not in household isolation (please see below)**

We have made the decision to close BCCS to all year groups, **EXCEPT Years 11 and 13**, with immediate effect from Wednesday 18th March 2020, until further notice.

There are a large range of reasons for this decision, primarily:

- A significant decrease in our teaching and administrative staffing capacity following yesterday's updated government advice regarding household self-isolation.
- Our ability to manage the school community and site effectively and safely.
- To prioritise the quality of teaching provision for public examination year groups, minimising anxiety for these students as far as possible
- An ability to direct resources to plan effectively for the possibility of imminent and long term closure of schools.

Please continue to follow government guidelines on self-isolation. In addition can I please require that you **do not send children with any illness into school** given the current demands on our community.

Whilst it may be less critical for secondary age students, we understand that there may be some child-care issues for parents and carers who work in **front line health or emergency services**. We recognise the importance of trying to maintain 8am-4pm provision for these families. Please email our Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mr Gunn ([mgunn@bristolcathedral.org.uk](mailto:mgunn@bristolcathedral.org.uk)) if this is a concern.

This is an unprecedented event for all of us; there is no way of knowing exactly when BCCS will be able to resume as normal. We understand that students and families are feeling anxious. We have taken time to speak with our students to reassure them of the steps we are taking as a school to support their wellbeing and learning. We discussed supporting each other and managing their anxieties, along with reinforcing the messages on personal hygiene. Please could parents and carers support and engage with student learning as much as possible, some initial ideas are attached; establishing routines will be very helpful.

We must all continue to be vigilant within our communities and follow the advice from the government and Public Health England. Should a student or member of staff develop symptoms while on site we will make arrangements for them to go home. We will then advise them to follow the staying at home guidance.

The full guidance for staying at home can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

The full guidance for educational settings can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

The usual channels of communication will stay in place, so do keep in touch where essential. Please understand that staff working routines may also be impacted by the partial school closure and outbreak, eg acting as carers for their families. There will be regular communication from us during the closure, via email/website/social media to help keep a sense of community and provide further information.

We are thinking about a range of ways that the school community can try to support each other as we move forward. We have been collaborating with FareShare South West for the last two weeks to provide a free breakfast club for all our students. FareShare South West is the UK's leading food charity fighting hunger and waste. They provide food to schools, communities and food banks across the country by rescuing good quality surplus food from supermarkets such as Tesco and Sainsbury's which would have otherwise gone to waste. In an effort to continue to support families who may struggle with the impending school closures, we will be setting up a distribution centre outside the school building and will provide food parcels to families, free of charge, every Thursday between 12:00-13:00pm. This will be set up outside the Cresswell Café, dependent on staff availability, on a first come first serve basis. The types of food will also vary week-to-week as it is dependent on what FareShare can access from their suppliers. Should your child be eligible for FSM and you wish to speak to staff, please contact Mr Patrick Callaghan ([pcallaghan@bristolcathedral.org.uk](mailto:pcallaghan@bristolcathedral.org.uk)) or Ms Messinger ([emessinger@bristolcathedral.org.uk](mailto:emessinger@bristolcathedral.org.uk)) via email.

Please be patient with staff if systems do not work immediately; trying to remote teach for a range of family circumstances, across all subjects, abilities and ages will undoubtedly cause some challenges.

Our first thoughts are for the health of all families, colleagues and friends at this difficult time.

Kind regards and very best wishes.

Paul Atkins  
Head Teacher