

19th March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Temporary Closure of The Dean Academy

As you will be aware, the Government has announced that all schools in England will close temporarily for the vast majority of children from end of the day on Friday 20th March. This decision has been taken on the advice of medical and scientific experts in order to manage the spread of COVID-19 and relieve pressure on the health system.

From Monday 23rd March, most students' education will continue from home. We have prepared well for these circumstances so that all our students can continue their education from home during the closure: all students have been given instructions on how they can access work on Classcharts and all who do not have access will be given paper copies. Our website explains this all in detail, along with our expectations of how learning will continue while students are at home, and how you can best support your child. If you are worried about your child not having access to work, email info@thedeanacademy.org and we will help.

The school will, however, remain open for some specific groups of students:

- Those whose parents are defined as key workers. The cabinet office will release details of what defines a key worker this week, but broadly it includes those employed in the NHS, emergency services, schools or elements of the food supply chain;
- Those who are particularly vulnerable;
- Those who have an EHCP.

County will continue to run school transport for the next 2 weeks.

I would ask that parents who believe they fall into the category of key workers to contact Theresa Whatley on info@thedeanacademy.org as soon as possible and no later than 12 noon on Friday 20th March so that we can arrange for your child to continue to attend school. Please state what type of key worker you are and your home address.

We will be identifying those students who are in the vulnerable category and will be contacting their parents and carers separately. If you believe your child falls into this category and you have not heard from us by 9am on Friday 20th March, please contact us on the above email address. We will also be contacting all parents of students who have EHCPs so that we can arrange for their education to continue face-to-face if necessary.

Furthermore, for the next two weeks the school canteen will remain open for students eligible for Free School Meals. FSM students will be able to come into the school for the school day or at 12.30pm each day to have their lunch. Again, please contact the school on info@thedeanacademy.org no later than 12 noon on Friday 20th March if you wish to take us up on this offer so that we can prepare food accordingly. If you believe your child may be eligible but you have not yet applied, please follow the instructions on this link: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-transport-and-free-school-meals/apply-for-free-school-meals/>

Over the next few weeks I will be starting to handover the leadership of the school to Emily Smith and Declan Mooney, who will be leading the school as Acting Heads of School in the short interim period between me finishing and Richard Brand starting as Headteacher on 1st June. Throughout the interim period they will be supported by the Executive Headteacher, Tim Gilson, and staff across The Athelstan Trust. I will remain in post until 19th April and hope we can manage this transition seamlessly for all.

Please continue to follow government guidelines around self-isolation and keep safe. These are unprecedented times, and the government has asked for a “war time” effort. We will do everything we can to support all students and families at this difficult time. We will continue to update parents on a regular basis with important information as we receive it. We will continue to communicate with you by email and text but please do regularly check on the school’s website.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Beveridge', with a stylized flourish underneath.

Tom Beveridge
Headteacher