



SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE SCHOOL

A CO-EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS AGED 11-19

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19th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you so far for your understanding and support during this challenging and unnerving time. As you may be aware, schools across the UK will be closing from Friday 20th March. Work for all year groups will begin appearing on the school website. This is an enormous task and I thank you for your patience whilst this happens. Work will be set on a fortnightly cycle. This will mean that work added this week will see the students through to the Easter Break. As these uncertain times seem set to continue, I will update parents during the Easter Break with regard to student return. If students are unable to return, a new cycle of work will appear immediately after the Easter Break.

The Government have outlined their intention for schools to continue providing care for those who are considered vulnerable children and those children of key workers. As it stands currently, we have contacted all parents and carers of students with an EHCP or have a social worker.

STFS will make every effort to accommodate the guidelines from the Government, but it may take a little more time than the 48 hours the Government have given us. It may well be that STFS is not in a position to accommodate these groups immediately. This allows us time to ensure that the site can be managed safely for those in attendance. The attendance of these groups is certainly not compulsory and I cannot guarantee that transport will be provided by the county for such few numbers. The school are unable to provide any transport after closure tomorrow.

With regard to Key Workers, if your child is under the age of 12 and you are a single parent family and a key worker, please let me know if you are intending on sending your child to school. This also extends to parents who are both key workers and have no other options available. If, as a key worker, you decide to send your child to school please can you inform me by Friday 20th March at midday. Attendance is not compulsory and should you wish to isolate your children please feel free to do so. Again, transport managed by the school will not run and I cannot guarantee that Bucks CC will run either. The school will only be open for normal school hours of 8:30 – 3:30pm. To help schools the Government will announce who qualifies as a Key Worker later today. Please refer to this list before contacting the school.

Until we have all plans in place, the school will remain shut on Monday 23rd March to all students including those who have indicated they will be attending as children of Key workers. I must be confident that the plan we are envisaging is safe for all involved.

STFS will not be able to remain open during Easter. I am very conscious of the strain that this current situation puts on all members of society and I must put the well-being of the staff first. Staff here will need a break so they are rested and ready to face the next phase after the Easter Break.



If, at any time, I am unable to manage the site safely then it may be necessary to close the school completely. This would mean closure for any students who are in attendance.

For any student attending school prior to the Easter Break, lessons will not run as normal, and students in attendance will complete the work that is already on line. Work will be completed in the cafe under supervision from staff, who may not necessarily be teaching staff. A number of areas of the school will be restricted due to the daily cleaning that is planned to take place during this time.

If there are any whole school announcements they will be made via the school website and Facebook. The staff at STFS have been truly phenomenal in trying to maintain some level of normality and I cannot thank them enough for their efforts. The students also have been calm and mature during this unsettling time.

You will also be aware that Year 11 and Year 13 students will not be sitting their Summer examinations. This is a huge decision and unfortunately leaves many of these students in limbo. Like all schools, we do not have any answers or details to the obvious questions these students will have. I have written separately to Year 11 students and parents. Mr Pike has done the same for Year 13s. More details regarding the examinations will follow once the Government have released further details on how students will be given their grades. The latest announcements from Ofqual regarding exams can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-a-further-statement>

In addition, AQA, which is the main exam board we use, are sharing information at the link below.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/coronavirus-updates?cldee=ZXhhbXNAc2lydGhvbWZnJlbWFudGxllm9yZw%3d%3d&recipientid=account-4f279b5e30eae51181083863bb343dc8-fee67d961a1b4cef9d1901ee5e3f7742&esid=b6bb0fbd-b669-ea11-a811-000d3a49dd7d>

If your child is in receipt of Free School Meals then our Business Manager, Emma Windsor, will be in touch shortly to explain how we will support students during this time.

To minimise the risk of spreading germs, reception will be closed to visitors from Friday 20th March until the end of the Easter Break, when it will be reviewed again. All contact should be made via email or telephone. Please be understanding that staff may take longer than usual to reply.

I am acutely aware that there are a great deal of unknowns currently and I can only apologise that we do not have any more knowledge or answers than everyone else. I will keep everyone updated once the Government make their intentions clearer.

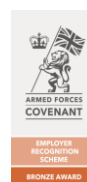
If you have any Safeguarding concerns during any period of school closure, then please contact the relevant team in Bucks or Milton Keynes. You can also contact Mrs Martindale, our DSL, via her school email address.

leah.martindale@sirthomasfremantle.org

Bucks: For concerns regarding **children**, contact the **First Response Team**

tel: 01296 383962

email: secure-cypfirstresponse@buckscs.gov.uk



Milton Keynes:

Please call 01908 253169 or 253170.

You can also email children@milton-keynes.gov.uk

I am sure you will understand the surreal times we face and hope you understand our current reasoning and decision making. We are getting limited guidance from the Government and I can assure you that I hear announcements at exactly the same time you do. This clearly makes it very challenging to forward plan. I appreciate that my letter may be contradict guidelines issued by the Government later, but I feel families need information now.

I will update families of key workers on Monday regarding our provision and ability to manage the site for the remainder of the half term.

Please stay safe and healthy.

Yours faithfully,

Neale Pledger
Headteacher

