



KING JAMES'S SCHOOL

KNARESBOROUGH

17th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

My sincere apologies for the decision to close the school to Years 9, 10 and 12 this morning. You will appreciate that the position in relation to COVID19 moved very swiftly after the government announcement yesterday evening, increasing social distancing measures and giving further advice to 'at risk' groups.

Like all large organisations our staff have children, extended families and some of them have underlying health conditions. By 7.00 a.m. this morning it was clear that a number of staff had to follow the new guidelines and stay at home. This applies not just to teachers but also to essential staff in catering and cleaning. This severely limited my capacity to fully open the school. I chose partial closure to try to limit the impact on your childcare arrangements (hence bringing in the younger pupils) and also to maintain teaching for Year 11 and 13 in particular.

We have a **training day tomorrow** (Wednesday 18th March) in which we are ready to train staff in how to use distance learning resources. We have spent the last week getting our VLE, 'itslearning', ready. The technical capacity is there, it's now just a case of moving resources across and training the pupils. We will roll this out to pupils and parents during the rest of the week. We recognise that some families may have better access to ICT than others and we will provide further advice about how to access and use the learning platform.

Please do not email the school at this stage asking for individual work to be set. With the number of pupils off school we do not have the capacity to do this. When the VLE work rolls out shortly the lessons will be tailored to individual classes and set by their class teacher.

We have cancelled the Bewerley Park trip and postponed the Geography fieldtrip for Year 12. These trips will be refunded but this may take a while as the finance office work through the volume of trips that have had to be cancelled.

I know that there is a lot of information coming through to you at the moment. I will try to keep parent communication streamlined but we are working in a very dynamic situation and our capacity to deliver an education service is under severe strain. **Please read communications from the school** and do **monitor your texts on a morning** to seek clarification on which year groups will be in school as this may need to vary in the next few days.

Arrangements for Thursday 19th and Friday 20th March

Currently we plan to open school on Thursday 19th to Years 7, 9, 11 and 13.

Currently we plan to open school on Friday 20th to Years 8, 10 and 12.

This may be subject to change and will be communicated or confirmed via text message.

Yours sincerely,

Mr CA Sugden
Headteacher