



Dear Parent / Carer

Latest changes for Secondary Schools: National Lockdown

Following the Government's announcement yesterday evening I felt it was important to contact you to keep you as fully informed as possible with everything that is happening in school. This latest announcement, informing us that a National Lockdown would be starting immediately, with new laws reinforcing the restrictions coming into play within 24 hours does have a direct impact on our previously communicated plans. Please find below some points that will hopefully clarify and reassure you as parents/carers.

Please be assured we continue to be working at pace and although several areas still lack clarity from the Department for Education, we are responding as soon as we have any information. This is a rapidly evolving situation and I am sure you are aware that more changes relating to schools could be announced in the next few days, especially around the exams for our Key Stage 4 students, so some information is subject to change.

I understand that many parents and carers will be frustrated by this situation and I do hope you find this information useful. This is going to be another stressful experience for us all, but, as always, if you have any concerns or queries please contact us via email at info@moorsidehigh.com.

Remote Provision for Year 7-11 (in place until February Half term)

In line with the government announcement, we have already started to offer remote provision for all students from Tuesday 5th January 2021. I am delighted to be able to say we are much better prepared for this lockdown and students will be able to follow their normal timetable. Staff will be delivering online, live teaching, setting tasks and also be available to answer questions students may have.

08:20-08:30: Each morning the Heads of Year will be online for a 'drop in' session and students are actively encouraged to attend before the official start time of 08:30.

Student attendance will now be tracked via Microsoft Insight and SIMS. Colleagues will be following up any missed sessions with phone calls where required. If your child is unwell or has a medical appointment and is unable to attend the remote lessons, please inform the school in the usual way. Only in the interests of safeguarding will a home visit be made.

As I have stated previously we really encourage students to hand write tasks, rather than use the computer. Following the last lockdown, we noticed a considerable reduction in the quality of students handwriting upon the return to school. We also feel, this will give them a break from working on a screen all day. Books/paper can be requested from school via the Head of Year and a timeslot for collection will be agreed.

Form time is a valuable aspect of learning and this will continue as normal as will PSHE lessons on a Monday afternoon. Each week there will be a virtual assembly that will be posted for all students to watch.

Provision for Vulnerable, Critical Worker and EHCP students

Provision is available from 08:30-14:55 each day.

The default position is that Moorside High School is closed and in essence has been designated as an emergency childcare provision. It is not compulsory for key workers' children to attend school. Please think carefully about your child's attendance in school and where there is an alternative option consider the health of your child and school staff. The Government's intention of closing the schools is to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, schools are only open to support the minimum number of children in order to keep the risk as low as possible.

The link to sign your child up for a place within this provision is now closed and further communication around needing the provision should be made with the Head of Year. Please note places are limited as we are working with a skeletal staffing body in order to provide remote provision.

Students in school will not have face to face teaching but will have access to a computer to take part in the remote provision but obviously from the classroom setting.

Lunch Provision: Children in school will be able to use their free school meal allowance or purchase lunch. Children are also welcome to bring a packed lunch and a bottle of water.

Covid-19 Testing of Students and Staff in School: From Monday 11th January 2021 we will be rolling out our testing programme for staff and students. More information will be sent separately along with consent forms and more accurate timings.

Year 11

The position on exams is not yet clear. The Prime Minister stated that, 'as a result of this lockdown, it will not be possible for all exams to go ahead as normal' and that Gavin Williamson would work with Ofqual to implement alternative arrangements. We do not currently



have any further details of what these alternative arrangements will be. Ministers have indicated this morning that GCSE and A Level exams will be cancelled and the DfE have confirmed that vocational exams scheduled in January will go ahead as planned.

As a result of the announcement that vocational exams will go ahead in January, the planned sessions for students who have an exam next week will have extra sessions later in the week remotely to support with their preparation.

With this in mind I urge all students to continue to engage with work and demonstrate high standards of commitment at all times.

Year 11 Parents Evening: 19-1-2021 (15:45-18:15): Parents Evening will go ahead as planned and will be delivered remotely. Please keep this evening free and more information will be shared soon with regards to booking your timeslots with teachers. We trialled the school cloud online parents evening platform with Year 7 earlier in the year and the feedback from families and staff was excellent.

Year 9 Options

Despite the national lockdown and remote learning this is an incredibly exciting time for Year 9 students. They will, as planned, be making their options choices later this term and the pre-planned options evening will still take place on 9th February. Staff are currently putting together a video (remotely) which will be shared on the evening, supported by an options booklet. Families will have the opportunity to ask further questions ahead of making key decisions.

As you may be aware, Moorside High School is in a very unique position, whereby we have invested in a full-time careers' expert on site. Mr Farmer is already planning a virtual careers week with assemblies to ensure the students are fully informed before making any choices.

If your child hasn't as yet received careers advice or you have further questions please contact Mr Farmer directly: Simon.Farmer@moorsidehigh.com

School Phone Lines and Visitors to The Moorside Campus

Due to working with a reduced staff onsite, our phone lines will only be open between 08:30 and 12:30. I urge all parents to make contact via Info@moorsidehigh.com or again by the Head of Year where responses are likely to be quicker.

Given the local down we are not able to have visitors on the Moorside Campus unless this has been agreed by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Wellbeing of Students

As I have said above this is going to be an extremely challenging time for us all. As a Physical Education Teacher, I have a deep-rooted interest and belief that sports and physical activity of any kind supports our wellbeing. Please can I urge all families to encourage students to remain active, whether this is a simple jog, cycle or quite simply walking around the local area adhering to national guidance.

Please remember we have the SHARP reporting system available on our website for specific things to be raised with our experienced safeguarding team.

Kooth.com provide access to counsellors supporting mental health 24/7 and further signposting is available on the school website.

Many thanks for your continued support

Yours faithfully

Mr C R Davis
Headteacher