



Underley Garden

19th March 2020

Dear Parents

School Open as Usual

As you will know; the Government have announced that schools in England will close from tomorrow, 20th March 2020 until further notice.

In the future we may need to follow this request which is consistent with all Cumbria Local Authority Special Schools however at present, we will be remaining **open as usual**.

Obviously, we are able to do this due to our current staffing levels however if this changes, we will be in touch as we are likely to have to close the school in phases in order to run safely. We will be in touch as soon as we know if this is going to happen. If this occurs and you are in a defined key worker role and provide a letter from your employer we can discuss arrangements which can be made for your child's continued education. Our focus at this time is to keep things as normal as possible whilst keeping to the guidelines re. hygiene and prevention. If we do need to close, our priority has to be on ensuring continuity of care for those young people who live with us and we will focus our staff who usually work in the school to support in the children's home so that we can continue to provide safe services during a period of high absence.

Although I appreciate this will be a very difficult time; I would like to reassure you that if we do close, we endeavor to continue to offer some sort of routine for our children and so we will be offering online learning and activities as appropriate for your child.

We are currently going through training in order to access the virtual school and then teachers will be in touch in order to support both you and your child/children in accessing this.

The virtual school creates a 'chat group' so that we can continue to offer lessons and provide work whilst being able to see and hear the teacher.

In order to successfully offer this, please can you let your child's form tutor know if you do or do not have access to a laptop/tablet/computer at home.

Once we have this information; we will be able to contact you with the next steps.

All of our young people's care and education is always our absolute priority and we will continue to do everything we can to work with you.





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If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your class teacher or myself April Boyd, Head of School.

We all hope that by taking decisive action as advised by the government now we can get back to our normal routines safely in the near future. At present there is no real indication about when this will be.

If you are one of the unlucky families who are required to self-isolate, during the period your child is at home, remember our staff team will still be in work. If you want advice about communication, sensory needs and behaviour alongside learning we can arrange telephone advice for you. We will also be in touch in order to provide work for your child to complete whilst off.

Please take care of your families at this challenging time and make sure you wash your hands more than ever before.

Many thanks

April Boyd
Head of School

