



# Bishop's Hatfield Girls' School

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5th January 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

The Prime Minister announced yesterday that a new national lockdown will come into force immediately. Schools will be closed during the period of lockdown, apart from to children of critical workers and those who fall into one of the vulnerable categories. If your child falls into one of these categories and you would like them to attend school then please complete this Google Form making it clear which days you would like to request <https://forms.gle/9nFLXe9uCaEsRz7v8>. No pupil should attend school without prior agreement.

Public vocational (e.g. BTEC) exams and assessments scheduled to take place in January **will go ahead as planned**. Any pupil scheduled to sit a BTEC exam in the next few weeks must continue to attend these as previously arranged. All other children and students will learn remotely until February half term at the earliest.

In terms of Year 11 and 13 exams scheduled for this summer, these will not go ahead as planned. The Secretary of State for Education will be asking Ofqual to consult rapidly on an approach for alternative arrangements that will allow students to progress fairly. As soon as we know more about this I will of course be communicating further with you and our pupils. It is likely that there will be some form of internal assessment for pupils due to take exams in the summer, so it is extremely important that they continue to work hard in the months ahead.

This announcement is of course disappointing to us all at school, but I fully understand the reasons behind it and I know from experience that the whole community will work together to ensure that we continue to make the best possible provision for our pupils. There are a number of immediate practical matters that I will cover in this letter, but please continue to monitor communications from school as new information is constantly being made available.

- Year 11 Parents' Evening will continue as planned on Thursday 14th January. Please make sure that you have logged in for your remote appointment using SchoolCloud, as per the instructions sent out at the end of term. Year 11 teachers will be issuing pupils with their mock results in the coming days and reports will be coming out next week. We are still planning to interview all Year 11 regarding their 6th Form applications and plans for next year and we will confirm arrangements for this in due course.
- If a pupil needs to access the contents of their locker please email the school using [admin@bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@bishophatfield.herts.sch.uk) and we will organise for this to be bagged up and collected. Please do not come into school without prior arrangement for this.

*"This is an OUTSTANDING school" - Ofsted 2016*



- Those pupils who are attending school because they fall into one of the above categories should remember to bring a packed lunch as we currently have no catering facilities in operation. They should also bring all the resources they need, including a reading book or other activity to complete should they finish the work set by their teachers. Pupils on site will be supervised to follow the same remote learning curriculum as that being offered to those at home.
- Pupils who were due to attend school but are absent on the day must be reported as absent by their parent/carer. Please call the school and leave a message by 8.30 am to report an absence - you only need to do this if your child was due to attend school.
- We will no longer be inviting pupils in to be tested for Covid-19, but will start to set up testing of those pupils and staff who are in school from next week. Once again, thank you to our parent volunteers; the school closure means that we no longer need such a large volunteer workforce but we will be in touch regarding this soon.

In my 'virtual' assembly to pupils this morning I said that our past experience of school closure is both positive and negative. Negative, because we all know that remote learning presents many challenges and cannot replace being face-to-face with teachers. However, we have all learnt from our past experiences and I know that staff are ready to ensure that the best possible provision is in place. They are working hard to make lessons as engaging and productive as possible. It is really important that pupils also learn from their past experiences of working remotely, building on what they did well and improving where they can. It is so important that pupils get into a routine of working immediately and that they try to follow the school day if at all possible so that they can be 'live' in the classroom with their teachers. We will be monitoring pupil engagement with remote learning and communicating with you if we have any concerns.

If your child is struggling with any aspect of remote learning please do get in touch with us by email. For subject matters the first port of call should be the class teacher. For non-subject matters or for any wider issues around working from home, please contact your child's Head of Year or Form Tutor. Thank you in advance for the support that I know that you will be giving your child over the coming weeks, but do get in touch if you have any issues or questions as it is so important that we resolve any problems quickly if we can.

I am always cautious about pressing 'send' for my communications home as it seems that no sooner has a letter been sent than a new announcement is made. All of the above applies at the time of writing, but do please look out for future updates. I know that I have said this many times, but thank you once again to those parents/carers who have sent in messages of support, encouragement and understanding. They mean a great deal to me and my staff and serve as a huge morale booster at this challenging time.

Yours sincerely,

Mr A Wood  
**Headteacher**