

Our ref: SA/GEBJ/acha

18 March 2020

Dear Parents (Reception to Year 8),

COVID-19 Update – Wednesday 18 March

You have seen, no doubt, the government announcement this evening that schools in the UK are to shut from Friday. This of course does not really affect us because we are due to break up for the Easter holiday at noon on Friday anyway and this remains the case.

It is clear however that parents, understandably, are making decisions to protect themselves and their children and a number are already away from school. We intend to operate tomorrow (Thursday) as normal and this will include ending the afternoon with the discos, albeit with slightly revised timings:

- Pre-prep – 2.45-3.25pm
- Yrs 3-5 – 3.30-4.10pm
- Yrs 6-8 – 4.30-5.15pm

We feel the disco is not too different to playing sport as happened this afternoon plus it is the same children who have engaged together all week. We also feel it will be a positive way to end the term after what has been a confusing and somewhat disappointing time with poor weather and various cancellations spoiling the enjoyment.

On Friday, given the diminishing numbers of attendance, the Easter services and the end of term Prize Giving, which are the main activities of the day, are not viable. As a result, we intend to be open in the morning for those who need the childcare but for any families who do not need to bring their children to school then we ask that you keep them at home. We will of course lay on a programme for the pupils who are in but we also intend to use the time available to undertake further staff training ahead of next term if schools are to remain closed off from pupils.

Should anyone require childcare on Friday therefore, we ask that you complete this very simple questionnaire which will help us to plan appropriately:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=C4bZQ3645kmlcWktJDcLTSfnEnbAVw9AmMya-F-QpbZUNUdEQlhKWFMlSFVNVE5FOTVTTjVWNE5NMi4u>

Our Summer Term is due to begin on Wednesday 15 April and a great deal can happen before then but I feel it is important to pick up on the term 'school closure'. It is likely that pupils will not be able to come in but we fully intend to 'open' in terms of educating the pupils. As we get closer to that date, I will be able to elucidate based upon the latest information but we fully intend to teach as well as we can



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in a way that is as manageable, effective and age appropriate as possible for the pupils and those looking after them. We are of course sensitive to the logistical difficulties that these government decisions will cause and we will do what we can to support families as we make sense of the evolving picture.

I would also like to acknowledge the announcement about senior school public exams. While these do not affect our age group, the clarity here is yet to come and, for now, I would urge parents who are affected not to panic. With regard to the Common Entrance and Academic Scholarship exams which our Year 8 pupils are taking, we continue to believe that these will take place – Common Entrance as scheduled and the Academic Scholarships at a later date than originally planned. I will let parents know as the picture unfolds.

Once again, I do hope you understand the need for these decisions which, as ever, are being made for the good of everyone in our community.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gareth Jones'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Gareth' written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name 'Jones'.

Gareth EB Jones
Headmaster, St Andrew's Prep