



3 April 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Covid-19 update 3 April 2020

I am writing to give you an update on several matters I have raised in my previous letters and to let you know our arrangements going forwards:

Arrangements for over the Easter holiday period

In support of families who are Key Workers and continue to be needed as critical frontline workers, we will remain open over the next two weeks including Good Friday and Easter Monday, on the same basis as we are now. We are open to pupils 9.00am to 3.00pm and provide a range of learning activities including independent study using Teams with pupils supported by a reduced number of members of staff who are working on a rota basis.

As we go into what would have been the Easter break the Joint Teacher Union Advice (see link below) is based on the following statement:

"This is not education as we have known it. SATS, GCSEs, AS and A level exams, as well as Ofsted inspections have all been cancelled. Children and young people have very different home lives and very different levels of parental support. It is not feasible to carry on as before during this crisis."

Although I have received overwhelming support from our members of staff, we are not in a position to be able to set the usual curriculum work on a regular basis, and I appreciate that a growing number of pupils and their parents/carers are finding the demands too great of being in a new and often challenging situation. I wish to clarify, going forwards that:

- It is important that, where possible, pupils and their families should be having a break from schoolwork over the next two weeks
- There is no expectation going forwards for pupils to strictly keep to deadlines as we know this is causing undue pressure
- We are aware that for Year 10 and Year 12 pupils it is important to continue with work in some form and contact with members of staff is equally important – this can continue after the two-week break
- We are also aware that our Year 11 and Year 13 pupils will be having a mixed response regarding their examination subjects as some vocational examinations are requiring closure of units of work. I am aware that individual members of staff are ensuring work is drawn to a conclusion to ensure the best possible outcomes for our pupils
- Those members of staff not on the school rota will be taking a two-week break from school; they are not expected to be in contact with pupils, set work, mark work or give pupil feedback
- The work set for pupils going forwards will be more project-based especially for Years 7 and 8 pupils and this may well be the case for Year 9 pupils with key tasks set for completion over a longer period. As previously stated, for Years 10 and 12 it will be a more bespoke system

<https://www.ascl.org.uk/ASCL/media/ASCL/Help%20and%20advice/Leadership%20and%20governance/Joint-union-advice-on-COVID-19.pdf>

I know a number of our subject areas are setting challenges for pupils and in some cases for families which we hope you are able to engage in and are finding them to be fun activities.



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National Voucher Scheme and the TSS Food Parcel Scheme

I wrote on the 31 March 2020 that we were awaiting the roll-out of the National Voucher Scheme that was announced on Tuesday. On Wednesday 1 April we were given the access to the scheme and we issued e-code vouchers to the families of all pupils registered as eligible for free school meals. The guidance to schools of how the system will operate is as follows:

- If the school holds an email address for a parent/carer then this is the Government's preferred option for sending out the e-code vouchers
- Where an email address is not available, there is the option to request vouchers which will be posted to school then out to parents/carers
- Week one, which has been this week, (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday), the Government gave schools access to e-code vouchers to the value of £10.00 per child
- For a full week the value of the e-code voucher will be £15.00 for each child which equates to £3.00 each day for each child
- The supermarkets accepting the e-code voucher are: Morrisons, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, Waitrose and M&S
- The voucher can be redeemed either on a smartphone or paper copy
- The guidance from the Government is that the e-code voucher cannot be redeemed against any age-restricted item so parents/carers will need to consider what is in their overall shopping if a voucher is to be used
- The e-code voucher will expire after one month if it is not spent
- The vouchers will be issued for term-time weeks only – this means the Government are not issuing e-code vouchers during what would usually be a school holiday period

TSS Food Parcel Scheme

Before the announcement of the National Voucher Scheme we arranged to have lunch provided on a daily basis initially, and we quickly moved to a three-week food parcel scheme to ensure our pupils who are eligible for free school meals, and whose parents/carers had notified us (my letter of 20 March 2020), were provided with food for over what would have been the usual school holiday for Easter. We have delivered over one hundred food parcels and we expect this number to increase over the next few weeks. We have revised the contents of our food parcels in partnership with our catering provider to ensure it is a manageable system for the significantly reduced staffing level for the caterers; after the Easter break, we will resume delivery.

Safeguarding

I wish to repeat the statements from my letter of 31 March 2020:

During this period of enforced school closure in support of the strategy to contain the spread of Covid-19, school is still operational. One of the responsibilities we have maintained and will continue to do so is Safeguarding; as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) I work with our other Deputy DSLs to coordinate our response to safeguarding matters that arise even though pupils may not be in school. If you have any safeguarding concerns please contact either the Head of Year or Assistant Head of Year of your child's year group and they will pass the details of the information you give them on to me as DSL or one of the Deputy DSLs who will operate as a "Duty DSL". Alternatively you can email enquiries@titussaltschool.co.uk to raise a concern but please do not give detailed information on a safeguarding matter using this email.

In addition, we established a team of Vulnerable Pupil Leaders who have been in regular contact with pupils and their parents/carers; this covers pupils with Social Worker support, Looked After Children and those with an EHCP. Work in this area is proving challenging due to the demands being made on Children's Social Services. If you feel you should be regarded as Vulnerable and you have not been contacted by a member of staff from Titus Salt School,

please email enquiries@titussaltschool.co.uk giving us you contact details and the name of your child and which year group they are in at Titus Salt School.

As I receive more information, I will update all parents and carers, so you are aware of the impact the current situation is having on all areas of the school. As I wrote in my letter of 30 March 2020, if you are a Key Worker and need support or feel you are eligible for free school meals or need support with meals or need IT support, please contact the school on:

enquiries@titussaltschool.co.uk

Once again, many thanks for your continued support. I wish you a happy Easter break.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Morrel', written in a cursive style.

Ian Morrel
Headteacher