



Dear Parents

At the end of an extraordinary week in all our lives, I wanted to send you the first of a series of weekly newsletters. The purpose is to provide you with support and guidance as we seek to continue the educational provision for your sons and daughters during the school closure period, and to celebrate some of the things they are doing both relation to their learning activities and simply adapting to 'life under lockdown'.

I hope you will take the time to read this through. Please be assured that although the school premises are currently closed, we are all still working hard to support your sons and daughters - and you - during this most difficult time. You can contact us through the school email address school@lgs.slough.sch.uk.

Mr J Constable - Headteacher

Coronavirus (COVID-19): what you need to do

Stay at home

- Only go outside for food, health reasons or essential work
- Stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Term dates

At this stage, we do not know how long schools will be closed for. Our intention is therefore to continue operating according to the published term dates.

We will 'close' for the Easter break at 12.30pm on Friday 3rd April and will 'start up' again for the summer term on Monday 20th April.

During the holiday period we will continue to be available through the school email address school@lgs.slough.sch.uk in case you wish to contact us for advice and guidance.

We will also be contacting you with more information about how we will be operating in the first part of the summer term.



Updates & questions

Is the school open for any students?

Schools are currently expected to open to provide supervision for children of critical workers and to provide a safe and secure environment for those who are vulnerable. In common with most secondary schools there was minimal uptake of this provision this week, and we therefore took the decision to close the school premises.

Schools in Slough are determined to continue critical worker provision, but on a more efficient scale and with due regard to the Government's instructions that **children should stay at home wherever possible** and come to school **only** if supervision is essential. In practice this means that schools are sharing arrangements until the end of the Easter holiday period, and that those schools who have more demand are willing to accommodate those children from other schools where the demand is very small. It may be that there is a more formalised structure in place after the Easter holiday period.

Any parenting requiring critical worker provision for their children after the Easter break should contact us through school@lgs.slough.sch.uk so that arrangements can be made.

How long will schools remain closed?

We simply do not know. The formal position is that schools are closed indefinitely, except for the provision being made for children of critical workers. We are finding it helpful to think about the next few months in three phases, planning for one phase at a time as the position becomes clearer.

Phase 1 - 23rd March to the end of the Spring term on 3rd April

Phase 2 - First half of the summer term - 20th April to 22nd May

Phase 3 - Second half of the summer term - 1st June to 17th July.

As we near the end of Phase 1 we will be taking stock of what has been working well, and how we need to adapt things for Phase 2. In the next few days we will be developing a clear view of what we want to achieve during Phase 2 in terms of minimising the potential disadvantage to your sons' and daughters' education, and how the systems we have currently in place can be strengthened or adapted.

We very much hope that schools will reopen for Phase 3. However, this cannot be guaranteed, so we are also working to ensure that important things that would happen at that time - such as induction into the Sixth Form for Year 11s, and preparation for university applications for Year 12s, can still take place,

How can I best support my son or daughter?

There is no easy answer to this. However, we know that there are some things that will be really important, for example:

- Help them to develop a routine with a good balance of school learning activities, other interests, and a focus on their own fitness and wellbeing.
- Provide them with reassurance. This time will pass, and we will make sure they are properly supported in the longer term.
- Take an interest in the actual school learning activities they are doing, not just whether they complete them or not. Talk to them about their learning.
- Encourage wider interests and skills. With more time on their hands, this is a opportunity to help them to become more *#LGSWellrounded*



Updates & questions

What is happening with GCSEs and A Levels?

All GCSE, AS and A Level examinations scheduled for this summer are cancelled.

The Department for Education's intention is to ensure that affected students can move on as planned to the next stage of their lives, including starting university, college or sixth form courses in the autumn. This means ensuring GCSE, AS and A level students are awarded a grade which fairly reflects the work that they have put in.

Ofqual (the examinations regulator) are developing a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student which reflects their performance as fairly as possible, and will work with the exam boards to ensure this is consistently applied for all students. All we know about this process so far is:

- The exam boards will be asking teachers, who know their students well, to submit their judgement about the grade that they believe the student would have received if exams had gone ahead.
- Teachers will take into account a range of evidence and data including performance on mock exams and non-exam assessment – there will be clear guidance on how to do this fairly and robustly.
- The exam boards will combine this information with other relevant data, including prior attainment, to produce a calculated grade for each student, which will be a best assessment of the work they have put in.
- Ofqual and exam boards have been the proposed process with teachers' representatives to ensure that it is as fair as possible.

We fully understand how upset our Year 11 and Year 13 students are at the cancellation of the examinations. The opportunity to take their examinations on their own terms has been lost but they will still receive the qualifications they deserve as they take the next step in their education.

We are expecting to receive further information about the process early next week, and we hope to be able to explain it to parents and students as soon as possible after that. In the meantime, please do not contact the school with questions about the process as we do not yet know the answers!

Teachers have been asking Year 11 and 13 students to complete further work which may help inform that judgement of the grade students would have been likely to achieve in the summer.

The **Department for Education** have published a set of questions and answers which can be found at the following location:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcse-as-and-a-levels-in-2020/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcse-as-and-a-levels-in-2020?_cldee=bWljaGVsbGVtdWNrbGV5QGxncy5zbG91Z2guc2NoLnVr&recipientid=account-3ab632881609e3118b6278e3b519b0a5-e4e913af9af44f50991152dad6b61006&esid=88b5299a-c169-ea11-a811-000d3a49dd7d

Ofqual, the examinations regulator, have also published a statement which can be found at

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-update-on-2020-exams?_cldee=bWljaGVsbGVtdWNrbGV5QGxncy5zbG91Z2guc2NoLnVr&recipientid=account-3ab632881609e3118b6278e3b519b0a5-e4e913af9af44f50991152dad6b61006&esid=88b5299a-c169-ea11-a811-000d3a49dd7d



Support and guidance

Free school meals

Students who have been receiving free school meals are eligible for continued support, and the Government is expected to launch a national voucher scheme next week. In the meantime, we have been providing parents with the opportunity to claim supermarket vouchers to the value of the weekly free school meal allowance through an app called Wonde.

We have been in contact with all those families we believe to be eligible for this. If you believe you are eligible but have not been contacted by us this week then please email Mrs Dobbs, Assistant Headteacher through the main school email address school@lgs.slough.sch.uk and she will get in touch with you.

Pupil Premium funding

The school receives Pupil Premium funding in respect of each student who has been eligible for free school meals in the last six years. Mrs Dobbs, Assistant Headteacher, is in contact with those families to see whether there is anything we can do to support students' learning at this time.

Online access

We are aware that online access may be difficult for some students at this time due to family circumstances. There may be things we can do to help. If lack of online access is causing problems for your son or daughter's learning at this time, please contact Mrs Dobbs, Assistant Headteacher through the main school email address school@lgs.slough.sch.uk and she will get in touch with you to discuss your situation.

Staying healthy

There are numerous sources of advice and guidance on staying healthy and looking after mental health and wellbeing during the lockdown period.

These include:

NHS guidance on staying healthy

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

NHS guidance on wellbeing in isolation, applicable to everyone

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-anxiety-tips/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-tips/>



Support and guidance

Online counselling for students

Parents are reminded that Ms Burns, our Behaviour and Welfare Practitioner who is a trained counsellor, will continue to provide a counselling service for any students who require support, during the school closure period. This would take the form of a real-time conversation between the student and Ms Burns using school email. Students have been informed via email of the procedure for booking an email counselling session. If parents have any concerns about their child's emotional wellbeing or safety then they can contact Ms Burns or Mr Cook via email.

Physical wellbeing

From Mr Bartlett and the PE team....

It is important to remember the many benefits associated with physical activity and exercise during these times. Being active and exercising on a daily basis significantly improves mental, physical and social well-being. There are so many opportunities to be active in the upcoming weeks, here are just a few:

- * **Joe Wicks (The Body Coach)** is performing a live HIIT workout every weekday morning at 9.00am designed specifically for students - <https://www.youtube.com/user/thebodycoach1>
- * Take on the '**Couch to 5K**' challenge - <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/couch-to-5k-week-by-week/>
- * Take part in a **yoga** session - <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene> or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTANio_2E0Q
- * Download the **Home Court App** and complete the various challenges on there and compete against your friends - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/homecourt-the-basketball-app/id1258520424>
- * Download the **Strava App** to record your daily walks/runs/bike rides - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/strava-run-ride-swim/id426826309>



Follow the **LGS PE Instagram @lgspe1** and **Twitter @LGSPE** pages and take on the **PE department's daily challenge**.

Staying safe

If any parents have a safeguarding or child protection concern during this period of closure, contact the school via school@lgs.slough.sch.uk with the subject line 'Safeguarding concern'. Parents can also contact the Children's Services department of their local authority. If you feel that a child is at immediate risk of harm then contact the police (101 for non-emergencies and 999 for emergencies).

We are aware that your sons and daughters will be spending more time online over the next few weeks and that it may be difficult for you to supervise this as effectively as you would like. Please talk to your sons and daughters about the software platforms they are using, and the online resources we have directed them to.

It is inevitable that your sons and daughters will want to contact each other through social media more than they would normally. This can be positive, but please be alert to any issues that this may raise. You can find advice about dealing with social media on our school website, or by visiting websites such as www.nspcc.org.uk. If you have concerns you would like to discuss with us, please contact the safeguarding team via school@lgs.slough.sch.uk.



Some snapshots...

What sort of things have students been doing this week?

For the first phase of the school closure, running up to the Easter break, teachers are working from home, setting and monitoring meaningful learning activities to deliver the planned curriculum content in their subjects for students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12.

For students in Year 11 and 13 we are supporting them with any further work we believe may be necessary or helpful in enabling them to secure their GCSE and A Level qualifications in line with the Department for Education's proposed process for awarding grades.

Here are a few snapshots from some of our teachers....

The Maths subject team report that most students have been taking the abnormal circumstances in their stride. Work is being done, via a variety of mediums: on-line, photographs. There is plenty of communication between teachers and students taking place via email. Progress is being made!

English teachers have been working with their classes in Years 7-10 to complete this half-term's topic in preparation for an assessment next week.

Students in Years 7 and 8 have been sent backing tracks of some of the songs they have performed in music lessons so that they can make music at home. They've been invited to teach the songs to their families and then take recordings if they'd like to. New tracks will be sent every Tuesday.

A Year 11 GCSE Music student has sent in a cover version of a song using his iPad to multi-track himself playing the guitar. He did this "just for fun" - good evidence of the creative arts being used for wellbeing/enjoyment in this strange time.

Year 13 Economics students have been demonstrating to their teachers the variety of ways in which they have been learning the last remaining aspects of their course.

Year 13 Psychology students have been completing aspects of their course, with some great examples of notes being made to support learning of a topic - a really useful skill to practice for university courses. **Year 12 Sociology students** have been producing detailed presentations of their current module.

The PE team have been encouraging students to get active with their daily challenges on Twitter and Instagram.

And from some form tutors....

Mr Batsman has encouraged 10H to take part in "Selfie Isolation" – a challenge to his form members to send pictures/videos of anything unique or unusual that they've done over the isolation period. It might be a particularly creative response to a piece of work, or something they've done to stay entertained. The idea is to create a "Here's what 10H did during their isolation" scrapbook when they get back.

Ms Marian's form 8V have been sharing with her some of the things they have enjoyed doing this week, as well as the challenges of organising themselves to work effectively at home. It has been good to hear how many of them have been trying out new creative activities or picking up ones they haven't done for a while - from gardening to guitar, sewing to singing.



Advice to students

Langley Grammar School Our guide to Distance Learning



Stay healthy -

- Follow the NHS advice on staying healthy. Wash your hands regularly with soap and hot water.
- Get some fresh air and exercise.



Get into a routine for each day -

Get up, eat, focus, work, exercise, relax. Aim for 5 hours of 'lesson time' and '1-2 hours' of homework, as you would if you were in school. However, your family might need you to be flexible.



Find your work on ClassCharts - Additional instructions might be on email, or on OneNote or Teams depending on how your teachers is setting work. Draw up a plan for the day, perhaps shaped by your timetable taking note of the deadlines your teacher may have given you.



Take screen breaks - Even if lots of the work is digital, you can still use pen/paper and take photos of your work. Try and be physically active at least once an hour. Remember that in school you get up and walk around at the end of every lesson!



Submit any assignments or assessed work on time - Mostly this will be done electronically; you should follow the guidance of your subject teachers. Teachers will use ClassCharts to record that work has been completed and will inform your parents if you are not doing so.



Plan carefully - Look at the deadlines you are given. You might need to complete some tasks really quickly. Others might take longer. Work out how best to use your time each day. Contact your subject teacher or form tutor by email if you are finding this hard – they can help you.



Manage your expectations of teachers -

- Teachers are going to be busy – they may be dealing with four or five classes each day. They may have family commitments as well.
- Use email to contact your teachers or form tutor, but expect up to 24 hours for a reply. Teachers will not be expected to read or send emails outside their normal school hours. Some teachers might use Teams, but talking to you through Skype and Chat are not appropriate.



Remember your manners -

Be polite and write emails properly! Think of emails as more like short letters and use the same format – 'Dear X.....Best wishes/Thank you'.



Be respectful in your communication - Treat each other well through various social media platforms or Teams. The school will still follow up on any unpleasant behaviour or bullying online.



Take time to reflect -

At the end of each day, maybe write something down / vlog. What have you learned both positively and negatively.



Advice to students

Langley Grammar School Safeguarding Reminders



Stay healthy -

- Follow the NHS advice on staying healthy. Wash your hands regularly with soap and hot water.
- Get some fresh air and exercise.



Keep your personal information private –

- Don't share phone numbers or email addresses. Check: are your privacy settings set to private?



Only talk to real life friends –

- Remember that people you interact with online might not be who they say they are.



Clean digital footprint –

- Be polite – if you have nothing kind to say, then don't say anything. Avoid using inappropriate language or being abusive in any posts or chat groups.



Be aware of the risks of online gaming –

- Being groomed, viewing offensive content, or being tricked into purchasing additional in-app features.



Watch out for live-streaming apps (e.g. TikTok) –

- The risks include (1) regretful 'in the moment' decisions like sending inappropriate images (2) viewing offensive / violent content (3) 'groomers' using the platform to exploit youngsters.



Be download savvy –

- Don't click on unknown programs or weblinks, to avoid viruses.



Stay connected –

- Use technology like mobile phones, social media, group chats and video chats – in a sensible and safe way. Listen to chatty radio stations or podcasts if your home feels too quiet at any point



Plan your day – Try to follow your usual routines, e.g. times to get up / bed. Build a physical activity into your daily route, e.g. going up/down stairs, dancing to music, 'workout' apps, broadcasts, e.g. Joe Wicks on YouTube, 9am Daily



Take time out and find ways to relax-

- Breathe in fresh air, e.g. stand by an open window/door, go for a short walk, find ways to relax (drawing / painting / mindfulness exercise / write / journalising / meditation. Ms Burns will periodically send out mindfulness exercises with further tips/advice for wellbeing.



Eat healthily and keep Hydrated

If you feel stressed or anxious, let people know you are struggling – parents / form tutors / phase leaders / safeguarding team.