



5 January 2021

Dear Parent and Carers,

The latest government announcement stated that schools will close, except for vulnerable and key worker students for this half term in the first instance. This has led to us revising our plans to ensure we continue to provide the best possible experience for all of our students; now that we know our school will be closed for the majority of our students until the February half term break when the government will review the current measures.

Since the initial lockdown we have spent a lot of time and energy reflecting and evaluating our previous approach to ensure that if we needed to revert back to whole school remote learning we could do this even stronger. Our aim is to provide our Ethos of Excellence, regardless of the students not being on our school site.

With this in mind Miss Gordon, Vice Principal for Quality of Education will be sending bespoke letters for each year group to ensure you, as parents and carers feel fully informed of the offer for your child. Our offer, through Google Classroom remains our primary means of educating and we strongly urge parents to only request paper packs of work should your child not have access to Google Classroom from home.

If having read the letter from Miss Gordon you have any questions regarding your child's engagement in remote learning please contact your child's Director of Learning so we can support.

If your child has special educational needs our Inclusion Team will be offering support remotely. Our SENDCo, Mrs Clark, has assigned members of the Inclusion Team to identified students and they will be within the Google Classrooms ready to offer support to your child. If your child has additional needs and is struggling to access learning at home please contact Mrs Clark who will then coordinate the bespoke support for your child.

We encourage parents and carers to support their child with remote learning. Miss Gordon will include some examples of how you may like to do this in her communication with you later this week.

Safeguarding:

The safeguarding of our staff and students remains our number one priority during remote learning. We have directed staff to only have contact with students via Google Classroom and email. We also ask you as parents to support your child in being safe online. It is likely that your child will be using the internet more than ever so safer internet messages are particularly important. Please discuss the below with your child:

- Privacy settings – Check that your child knows about the privacy settings of their favourite accounts and that these settings protect them from being contacted by strangers.
- Awareness – Discuss whether your child knows the rules about how to behave and stay safe on the sites, games and apps that they use. Check they are aware of how to block, mute and report other users that aren't behaving and encourage them to inform you if they are concerned or upset about anything.
- Consent – Discuss the importance of asking others before sharing something about them (including selfies) and remind them that things which we may think are okay or funny might actually worry or upset someone else.

Further guidance and information can be found at www.internetmatters.org

For out of hours safeguarding concerns please contact Mrs Holland on 07837 095068.

Year 11 and Year 13:

During the announcement last night, the government stated that they will be working with the exam invigilator, Ofqual to look at 'alternatives arrangements' to the 'full set of exams' in the summer. We don't yet have any further information on what this will mean or what this looks like. What we do know is that the students will need to be assessed in some way and now, more than ever they will need to be engaged in their studies. We were saddened to hear of this decision as we know this news will emotionally affect our exam year groups who have all been working so very hard to prepare for their exams and have been putting in maximum effort to catch up from the first lockdown. We have set up an email address for Year 11 and Year 13 students to use to ask us any questions or share worries they may have. Please share the following email address with your child if they are in Year 11 and Year 13. Miss Jenkinson, our Vice Principal for Achievement and Exams will oversee this and provide responses and support. The email address for Year 11 and Year 13 students is: gsa-support@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk

Well-being support for our students:

We continue to recognise the importance of providing students with a means of informing us of any individual support they need. We ask that you please take a bit of time to ensure your child is aware of the following ways in which they can raise a concern, or access support from us if they need to;

- GSA Well-Being line - Students can call or text this number - 07969203860 - and a member of our pastoral team will offer support and guidance.
- You child can also send an email to the following address childprotectionissue@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk if they have any concerns. This provides a direct link to our designated safeguarding leads Mrs Holland and Mr Dakers.
- In addition, there is a 'help and advice' section on the student hub that provides useful links and phone numbers of services and agencies that can also offer support on a range of different issues.

Key Worker/Vulnerable In-school Offer:

This offer will continue as planned, however, over the next 48 hours we will be looking at moving the offer onto lower site by the end of this week now that the majority of our staff are based at home. Mr Hartley, Assistant Principal, will be in touch with those concerned towards the end of the week to share details with you. This will not affect the start/end times or the quality of provision planned and our school bridge will still be accessible. Please may I ask that you only use this offer if your child can not be at home due to yourselves being out of the house for work classed as 'critical' by the government. We have a high number of students registering access to this offer and keeping numbers low to safeguard our students and staff remains a major priority.

Key contacts:

- Year 7: Mr Smith, Director of Learning - osmith@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- Year 8: Mr Richardson, Director of Learning - Lrichardson@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- Year 9: Miss Johnson, Director of Learning - rjohnson@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- Year 10: Mr O'Toole, Director of Learning - cotoole@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- Year 11: Miss Wilkinson, Director of Learning - Lwilkinson@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- 6th Form: Mrs Fawcett, Head of 6th form - kfawcett@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk and Mr Spears, Director of Learning (Year 12) - cspears1@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- Safeguarding: Mrs Holland - cholland@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- Remote Learning: Miss Gordon, Vice Principal for Quality of Education - jgordon@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- Exams: Miss Jenkinson, Vice Principal for Achievement - Ljenkinson@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- Key worker/vulnerable offer: Mr Hartley, Assistant Principal - khartley@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk
- SENDCo: Mrs Clark - sclark@george-spencer.notts.sch.uk

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support. Regardless of working very differently everyone at George Spencer Academy will be trying their very best to provide our Ethos of Excellence for your child at home.

Kindest regards and take care.

Mrs H Corbett
Principal