

18th March 2020

Dear parents and carers,

Here is your daily update from The Giles Academy.

This situation surrounding COVID-19 is proving to be long and complicated and I regret having to deliver these messages, but as ever, I want to be transparent and as clear as possible with our communication to you all.

I have written to you over the last few days, following the Prime Minister's press conference and the updated announcements of a number of changes to the approaches being implemented by the UK government to combat COVID-19.

Tuesday and Wednesday have been incredibly challenging, with highly significant staffing shortages due to the new 14 day self-isolation mandate and the advice for people with long term underlying health conditions, the details of which I sent out yesterday.

These guidelines have needed to be followed by students and staff alike, so please read my letter of 17 March 2020 carefully.

Remarkably, we have managed to deliver all of the timetabled lessons over the last two days due to the fantastic spirit and work ethic of the staff. I would also like to say our students have been quite simply fantastic. During a time of great uncertainty, they have been positive, resilient and have demonstrated fantastic attitudes; we have all been so impressed with them.

However, it is with deep regret I have to inform you that our staffing levels have been further depleted during the course of the last two days; we have reached a point where it is no longer safe to attempt to deliver our curriculum provision for all year groups.

Therefore, Giles Academy will be partially closed from Thursday 19 March 2020 until further notice.

The details of this partial closure are as follows:

- **The school will be open as normal for all Year 11 & 13.** Students in this year group will follow their normal timetable and be taught by subject specialists as far as possible.
- **The school will be closed for students in Years 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12.** Work will be set in English, Maths and Science and as many other subjects as possible for students to complete and this will be posted on Show My Homework.

However, if the following criteria apply to you and your family circumstances, you can still send your child into school if they are in Year 7, 8, 9, 10 & 12:

- **If you work in the NHS or other critical public services, such as police and fire service mean that it would not be possible for your child to remain at home.**

If the condition above applies to you then you can send your child into school tomorrow.

However, please be aware that where we will not have the staffing capacity to deliver the normal curriculum. The timetables will be collapsed and students will be grouped together to participate in larger group activities. Students will be required to bring PE kit into school, please ensure they wear their school uniform for the day.

Students who are in school from tomorrow onwards will need to report to the school hall for registration.

I completely understand that this is an entirely unsatisfactory situation and I am disappointed to have to put these plans in place, as they significantly differ from the ambitious vision for education we have for our students. However, we are navigating our way through significant challenges and I am certain that it will emerge in the next few days for all schools in England to be directed to close.

Given that the national situation is so fluid, we have to respond to information as quickly as we are able to and always putting the interest of our students and staff first. The timing of the daily press conferences make decision making all the more complex. This means our plans are subject to change and we will communicate with you as swiftly as we are able to.

I greatly appreciate the messages of thanks and support that we have received from our parent community over the past few days. It is critical that we continue working together to guide and support our young people through these most challenging of times.

Yours faithfully,



Mr Juan Diaz
Deputy Headteacher



Miss Katie Belcher
Deputy Headteacher