



18 March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Partial School Closure on Thursday 19 and Friday 20 March 2020**

It is with huge regret that, due to very high and unprecedented levels of staff absence, Cotham School will be partially closed in order to preserve the health and safety of students and staff on the school site, on Thursday 19 and Friday 20 March 2020. This situation will be reviewed daily.

**We will be partially open for the following students only on Thursday 19 March and Friday 20 March 2020:**

- 1. Students in Year 7 who are not in household isolation**
- 2. Students in Year 11 who are not in household isolation**
- 3. Students in Year 13 who are not in household isolation**
- 4. Any students whose parents or carers are front line NHS and other emergency services staff who are not in household isolation**
- 5. Children in Care who are not in household isolation**
- 6. Year 12 BTEC Science students should come in Thursday only to RGS as previously arranged to complete coursework who are not in household isolation**
- 7. Year 12 BTEC Business L2 students should come in on Thursday only to Cotham as previously arranged to do their Finance Exam. The only exception to this are students who are in household isolation**

Please refer to your text messages and the Cotham School website for daily updated information:

**Updates will be posted on the School Website under the Parents and Carers tab link [here](#)**

To reassure you, **we have no confirmed cases of Covid-19 in the school**. This partial closure is about managing the school safely given very high levels of staff absence as people follow the government's advice about when to self-isolate issued on Monday 16 March. Currently in excess of 30 % of our staff have had to take this advice.

### **Students with Underlying Health Conditions**

Students who have underlying health conditions should **NOT** come into school as they are at greater risk from COVID-19.

These conditions as stated by the NHS are:

- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Heart conditions, such as heart failure
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Chronic Kidney Disease
- Chronic Liver Disease, such as hepatitis
- Chronic Neurological Conditions, such as Parkinson's disease



- Problems with your spleen - for example, sickle cell disease, if the spleen has been removed
- A weakened immune system as a result of HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy

If you are concerned about any other underlying health conditions please contact your GP for further advice.

Please find below some links to COVID-19 guidance in a range of languages.

#### **From Doctors of the World:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/193qQN9I04Dvf0N9L5zeWTiXK\\_DRbrAxg](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/193qQN9I04Dvf0N9L5zeWTiXK_DRbrAxg)

(Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Dari, English, Farsi, French, Hindi, Kurdish, Malayam, Mandarin, Pashto, Portuguese, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Turkish, Urdu, Vietnamese)

#### **From Big Leaf Foundation:**

<https://www.bigleafoundation.org.uk/covid-19-advice.html>

(Pashto, Arabic, Kurmanji, Sorani)

[https://www.facebook.com/Covid-19-coronavirus-information-102982397998227/?\\_tn=%2CdK-R-R&eid=ARCu9Dfz61JCjc8JQ7XnjtIG4A0F68jsNZ3CHe-5o7xLaaxrYn2qDiZl3I3U-8AWqqcMBue1U28mOM4v&fref=gs&dti=1667894290115570&hc\\_location=group](https://www.facebook.com/Covid-19-coronavirus-information-102982397998227/?_tn=%2CdK-R-R&eid=ARCu9Dfz61JCjc8JQ7XnjtIG4A0F68jsNZ3CHe-5o7xLaaxrYn2qDiZl3I3U-8AWqqcMBue1U28mOM4v&fref=gs&dti=1667894290115570&hc_location=group)

(video in Pashto and English)

#### **Free School Meals**

If your child is eligible for a free school meal, packed lunches will be available daily at the school for your child to collect.

Students should attend the Student Reception on Cotham Road between **12.00pm and 12.45pm** to collect their lunch if required.

Please note that due to staff absence, there will be no facilities for students in Year 8, Year 9 and Year 10 to eat their lunch on site.

Important: Students coming to collect their lunch **must come with their school lanyard**. They do not need to wear their school uniform.

#### **Students in Year 11 and Year 13**

It is imperative that students in Year 11 and Year 13 attend school as normal to enable them to continue to study for their exams.

All curriculum essential trips are still scheduled to go ahead as planned. We will update you if this should have to change.

In terms of the summer exam season, at this time the expectation is still that A level, BTEC and GCSE examinations will continue to be scheduled as planned and students must



continue with their examination coursework and preparation. Again, we will communicate with you should the Government decide that arrangements for Public Examinations will change.

### **Students in Year 13**

Year 13 students from both Cotham and Redland Green Learning Communities should attend their lessons as usual.

### **Continuation of Learning via Google Classroom**

We are currently completing Remote Learning Plans for each of the year groups that will be affected by the partial school closure. I know that you will appreciate the enormity of this task. Work for those students affected by the closure for Thursday 19 March and Friday 20 March will be posted directly to google classroom.

We are in the process of collating formal Remote Learning Plans for all of our students which will cover a 2 week period commencing from Monday 23 March should the school be required to close to some or all of our students. These will be made available via the school website shortly. We will also write to you again with an electronic link to these when they are completed.

In summary:

- Each subject will create work that students should complete for each of the lessons that students will miss as a result of the school closure;
- Students should follow their usual school timetable and complete the work for each lesson that they miss using the instructions provided;
- In the event that the school is forced to close fully for longer than 2 weeks, a further Remote Learning Plan will be produced;
- Instructions for each lesson and the supporting resources will be posted on Google Classroom for students to access there.

Any questions that students may have about the work set should be sent via Google Classroom or email to enable staff to respond appropriately. Staff will feedback to students individually or collectively where appropriate.

### **Supporting Your Child's Mental Health**

We are aware that this is a difficult time for families. We would like to sign post you to some support available online.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. Support can be found on:

- [Mind](#)
- [BBC](#)

Advice for talking to your child about the Virus can be found on [Child mind](#).

Websites where your child can seek support with their mental health are available here:

- [Anna Freud](#)
- [Young Minds](#)
- [BBC](#)
- [Kooth - Online counselling](#)



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- [Child line](#)

### **If You Are Concerned About the Safety or Welfare of a Child during Closure**

If you feel that a child is at urgent risk of harm please contact the First Response Team on 0117 903 6444 during office hours, the Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615165 at all other times, or the police on 999 if the child is at immediate risk.

You can report any information to us during closure using the email address [safeguarding@cotham.bristol.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@cotham.bristol.sch.uk). Our dedicated safeguarding team will continue to monitor this during closure.

### **Keeping in touch: Absence number - 0117 919 8019**

Please continue to inform the school immediately if you or your child have been advised or have self-selected to self-isolate or if you believe that you may have been exposed to Covid-19. Please take very special care to follow NHS advice on self-isolation [NHS 111 website](#).

Once you have notified the school that your child is self isolating there is no need to continue to contact the school on a daily basis as this overwhelms the Attendance Line with messages.

We apologise sincerely for the inconvenience this partial closure may cause. Please refer to your text messages and the Cotham School website for daily updates.

With very best wishes

Yours faithfully

**Ms J Butler**  
**(Headteacher)**