



Executive Headteacher: Huxley Knox-Macaulay MA (Ed)

Head of School: Gavin Peevers

Ratton School

Park Avenue, Eastbourne

East Sussex BN 21 2XR

tel: +44 (0) 1323 504011

fax: +44 (0) 1323 520364

email: info@ratton.co.uk

20th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

School Closure Information

You will now be aware from our previous communication we have been directed by government to close for all but children of key workers and other defined groups of students from today. It is government advice that parents in these groups should only send their children into school if there is no safe alternative. During this period of closure we will regularly update the website – please look at the coronavirus updates section for school news during closure and helpful advice.

Learning

Our core business is the continued learning of all our students. We have taken steps to ensure that all students know where to access materials for online learning during a full school closure. Details on how to access learning have been shared with students in classes earlier this week. We explained how we are supporting students to work from home and they were also given an opportunity to ask questions about the practicalities of accessing work during any potential closure. [Click here to see the PowerPoint presentation that was shared with your child regarding their Online Learning.](#)

It may also be useful to create a conducive learning environment at home by keeping to a schedule to ensure that your child's learning continues, this will also reduce stress and boredom in the event of a school closure. Please see our suggested timetable linked in the student section and list of wellbeing resources accompanying this letter.

We have set up an area on our website called **Home Learning**. This will include all our online learning, up to date information, guidance and how to seek help. We will continue to share updated material and resources for the duration of closure.

Access to digital technology

For those families without suitable internet access, we will also make paper-based work packs available to students and will distribute them to students once we know who they are. We can also potentially loan equipment to students who are unable to work online. Please email their tutor directly or itsupport@ratton.co.uk to let us know if your child needs a loaned digital resource. If they receive a loaned resource, please encourage them to treat it with care and respect - we will need it for learning when we fully open again.

Students can also download Microsoft Office for **free** onto personal devices. More information can be found on our website under Home Learning.



South Downs Learning Trust

South Downs Learning Trust is an exempt charity and a company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 8130302 and has a registered address at Park Avenue, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 2XR



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Year 11 - Exams

By now you will be aware that the government has announced that GCSE exams will not take place this summer, but Year 11 students will receive a qualification in recognition of their learning over five years of secondary school. We have spoken to Year 11 students in assembly and have stressed the importance of continuing learning over the coming months, and we hope that you can support them. Year 11 students will still be accessing college, jobs and university in the future, and the learning that they engage in now will continue to give them an academic foundation to flourish in later life. Additionally, although the situation is presently unclear, teachers may be asked to give some sort of assessment to inform any grading for qualifications awarded. It is therefore important that Year 11 students continue to engage with online learning and with their teachers online in the coming weeks.

Staff Availability

Teachers will continue to set work in line with our current schemes of work and GCSE programmes daily for students to access. Staff will be available via email during normal school hours. Students will be able to submit completed tasks to staff for feedback via school email as requested by subject teachers.

Students

We recommend that students follow the timetable on our website under Online Learning. Additionally we recommend:

- Years 7, 8 and 9 students to read for at least 30 minutes a day
- Year 10 students to access GCSEPod for one hour's self-directed revision a day
- Year 11 students to access GCSEPod for two hour's self-directed revision a day

There is guidance for GCSEPod on our website under **Home Learning**.

Communication

All of our communications will remain open, our phone lines are open and our emails are being monitored. For every student with SEN, they will be assigned a link member of the SEN department who will check in with you/them regularly to ensure they can access their work and to provide any support that they need.

Pastoral

We remain fully committed to supporting student wellbeing and we will be looking at e-mails. Please do get in touch with your child's Head or Assistant Head of Community if you need support. A list of wellbeing resources for young people for sharing is below:

<https://youngminds.org.uk/> - on mental health wellbeing strategies

<https://www.childline.org.uk/> - advice on their website and a phone and email support service

<https://www.healthforteens.co.uk/feelings> - a wealth of advice regarding emotional issues and general health

<https://www.childrensociety.org.uk/mental-health-advice-for-children-and-young-people> - mental health topics



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Papyrus is the suicide prevention charity who are there to help you if you feel you aren't coping

<https://papyrus-uk.org> (if you feel this way you must tell an adult you trust).

Youth Access have links to lots of organisations: <https://www.youthaccess.org.uk/supernav/links>

Please find a list of sources of support for carers and parents below. We want to help support you in these challenging and stressful times:

Mind provides information on mental distress plus ideas for self-care <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Samaritans are there to listen if you are feeling overwhelmed <https://www.samaritans.org>

CAMHS has advice on mental wellbeing for children and parents: <https://sussexcamhs.nhs.uk/help-support>

NHS information on Coronavirus <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19>

Plus this advice from the Mental Health Foundation on protecting your mental health

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-duringcoronavirus-outbreak>

We are acutely aware the coming weeks will be stressful and challenging for us all. Even though school will be closed to the majority of students, we will keep in touch and provide you with regular updates and information via the website, email and our Edulink app. We hope that you and your families are able to stay safe and well during this period and send our best wishes to all in our wider school community.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Knox-Macaulay
Executive Headteacher

Mr Peevers
Head of School



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