



# WILLIAM FARR

C of E Comprehensive School

Our ref: JMK/SXG

26 January 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian

## School Update

I hope you and your family are well, despite the challenging times we continue to face. As we enter the fourth week of full school closure, I wanted to keep you updated on what is happening in school.

I would like to personally thank you for the continued arrangements you have made to enable your child, wherever possible, to stay at home safely at this time. The Government's message continues to be that if there is a parent working from home, the child should be kept at home to minimise the risk to the child, family and wider school community. In line with our legal responsibility, the school remains open only to students whose parents are critical workers and vulnerable children. When I have received further information from the Government on when schools will fully reopen, I will, of course, let you know.

Since the start of term, staff have been working very hard to ensure that our remote education provision is providing the best education we can whilst your child is learning from home. You will have recently received feedback on how well your child is engaging with home learning across their subjects through an engagement report and we hope that this has been useful in keeping you fully informed. I am very pleased to say that following the latest report, 97.2% of all students have engaged in online learning. We are very appreciative of all the work you are doing to keep your child engaged and motivated in their learning. Parents of students who have not been fully engaging in home learning will have received contact from the school. The second engagement report will be released to parents at the end of this week.

We know that remote education creates challenges in juggling work, home education and family commitments. Learning how to use new IT systems, such as TEAMS, has facilitated face-to-face learning and strengthened our remote education provision, but we recognise some students and parents may require additional support. I hope that the information sent out by the school in how to access the IT platforms has been helpful. If you or your child are experiencing any problems accessing IT, please email the school on [wfarr@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:wfarr@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk) and we will be pleased to help.

Shown below are links to 2 Youtube videos for parents on how to join a TEAMS meeting, which you may find useful. The videos cover joining TEAMS via a laptop, Apple device (such as an iPad or an iPhone) or an Android device (like a google chrome laptop or any phone that isn't an iPhone, e.g. a Samsung phone).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MEsaFMWn0Vc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ga64MuSlAxY>

In line with Government requirements, our remote education offer can now be found on the school website under the Covid Correspondence section.



To help us to continually review and refine our remote education provision, I would like to invite you to complete a short online parent survey, using the link below. The survey is completely anonymous and will only take a few minutes to answer. **Please complete the survey by 9am on Tuesday 2 February 2021.**

[https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=FwG0COlocEGBmf2h6ue\\_KcB6NkflintHv9PEXLjRW\\_T1UMTVLRzBPOFAOQUptNfNLVUxESzdPREJaTi4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=FwG0COlocEGBmf2h6ue_KcB6NkflintHv9PEXLjRW_T1UMTVLRzBPOFAOQUptNfNLVUxESzdPREJaTi4u)

The school has now updated its Covid-19 Risk Assessment following national guidance. This has been shared with staff, unions and our Health and Safety Consultant. This can be viewed on the school website, under the Covid Correspondence section.

Lateral Flow Testing for asymptomatic Covid-19 cases is now up and running in the school. The school has been working with a fully trained company called 'Adecco', who have supervised the testing of students at Lincoln University and Bishop Grosseteste University. I am very grateful for a group of William Farr staff who have volunteered to be trained to support the testing going forward. Over the last 2 weeks, 100 staff have received the Lateral Flow Tests, together with some students of parents who are critical workers and vulnerable students. I am delighted to say that all test results, to date, have been negative.

You may be aware that on 20 January 2021, the Government announced that the daily testing of students who come into close contact with a confirmed case of Covid-19 will cease due to a review of the scientific accuracy of test results. The Government has stated that the mass testing of students should continue upon the reopening of schools as planned. This means that if you have already given your consent for your child to receive a test, they will receive this when school is fully reopened to all students. It also means that should your child come into close contact of a confirmed case of Covid-19 in school, they will be required to self-isolate, as previously, for 10 days. I will keep you updated if there are any further Government changes on testing.

The options process for Year 9 has now started and all of the information for students and parents can be found in the Teaching and Learning section of the school website. Year 9 students will be taken off timetable on the morning of Tuesday 2 February 2021 for a remote version of their Options Morning. This means that the Year 9 Parents' Evening will now be held on **11 February 2021**. Please can options forms be submitted in the week beginning 1 March 2021 with a deadline of **5 March 2021**.

The application process for the Sixth Form has also now started and all of the information for students and parents can be found in the Sixth Form section of the school website, including the application form. We ask that applications are submitted by **5 March 2021**.

To further strengthen our Sixth Form, the school is making some important changes to the Sixth Form staff leadership structure from September 2021. You will have received a separate letter from Mrs Grant (Assistant Headteacher) explaining these changes, which I would be grateful if you could read.

As you will be aware, Ofqual (Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation) is currently seeking views on the proposals for the awarding of teacher assessment grades for students sitting external exams this summer. This consultation ends on 29 January 2021. When the school has received the outcome from the consultation and made plans for how to implement the proposed changes, these will be communicated to parents of Year 11 and 13 students.

I understand the significant family pressures placed upon you at this time to manage work, home life and home learning. Please feel free to access the information included on the VLE, under the Care and Guidance/Student Welfare section. This signposts support for students on maintaining positive mental wellbeing; including child-friendly information on the coronavirus and help in managing stress and anxiety.



The NHS service, Healthy Minds, is offering a variety of free, online workshops for parents and students over the coming months, which you may be interested in attending. These include:

- Improving a Young Person's Wellbeing
- Staying Emotionally Well
- Parents Supporting Children with Anxiety and SEND
- Building Positive Self-Esteem

Further information, including dates and times can be found on the link below:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/healthy-minds-lincolnshire-20000004846>

The NHS have also released several online recorded workshops for both young people and parents on managing worries and anxious feelings; managing angry feelings; a survival guide to change and supporting children with Anxiety and SEND. <https://www.lpft.nhs.uk/young-people/online-workshops>.

Parents of children receiving Free School Meals will shortly receive a separate letter explaining the arrangements for payment.

If you or your family are suffering from financial hardship at this time and would like any additional support to access food and care parcels, please contact Mrs Bates (Assistant Headteacher) in confidence, via email [h.bates@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:h.bates@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk). To date, the school has arranged for 5 families to receive a food parcel.

Finally, can I reiterate again my thanks to you in all that you are doing to support your child's education and wellbeing. If you have any questions or need further support, please do not hesitate to get in touch via our email address: [wfarr@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:wfarr@williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk)

I will, of course, keep you updated on any further developments as, and when, they occur.

All good wishes to you and your family.

Yours faithfully

**Jonathan Knowler**  
Headteacher