

Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that everyone is doing well and that the children and young people have settled into their new routines. Individual schools and phases will also contact you this week. However, I wanted to take the opportunity to communicate with everyone, ahead of what would (in normal circumstances) be our Easter holidays.

Easter holidays – for the majority of learners in our schools

We are very aware that the next two weeks will not feel like a holiday for most of our families. We do, however, want to create a sense of some kind of break for both families and school staff. Therefore, rather than setting additional school work, we will be allowing the pupils time to catch up with what has already been set. Each school/ phase will also be sending suggestions of optional holiday activities. We are trying to get a balance between having a pause in school work, but also providing some ideas of activities, taking into account that everyone will be at home.

Between 3 April and 20 April we will be moving to an even further reduced skeleton staffing in our schools during what would be the Easter holidays. Therefore, we may not be able to respond to non-urgent enquiries. Teachers will not be interacting online during the holiday period.

Easter holidays – vulnerable children and the children of key workers

Our schools continue to be open throughout the holiday period to a small number of learners, who are either vulnerable, or are the children of key workers, critical in the response to Covid-19. Hopefully, if that applies to your child, you have already signed up to our Easter provision. However, we are aware that Easter work rotas could change for NHS staff and other emergency services. Please contact your school/ phase via email, if you find your circumstances change and you need support over the next two weeks. We will need to know in advance, if your child is attending.

Summer Term

Technically the summer term will open on 20 April. For most students this will mean that we resume e-contact and remote learning.

In terms of our emergency provision for vulnerable children and key worker families, we think that it is highly likely that we will need to amalgamate our secondary age range provision onto the Hampton College Secondary Phase site after Easter (i.e. Hampton Gardens pupils would join those at Hampton College). We will confirm nearer the time whether we need to do this. You will appreciate that this is a fast moving and constantly changing situation. However, I would like to reassure Hampton Gardens pupils and parents that some HG staff would be in each day, ensuring the pupils are supervised and cared for by familiar faces.

Free School Meals

Following our previous communications in relation to Free School Meals, I can confirm that the government has now launched a National Voucher Scheme. If your child is eligible for Free School Meals, your school will be in touch about how this will work going forward. Hopefully, the national scheme will mean one solution is in place for the full duration of the crisis.

Educational visits

The current situation means that it is very unlikely that any scheduled educational visits will happen this school year. We are currently in the process of refunding parents, whose children had been scheduled to visit Iceland at Easter.

For those of you whose children had been signed up for other visits/ residentials at any of our schools, we are asking:

- Please make no further payment towards any trips
- Wait for communication from our Finance Team about refunds

We would be really grateful if you could bear with us and wait until after the Easter holidays, when we will send instructions about how refunds will be issued.

Finally,

I wish you all some rest and recuperation over the next couple of weeks. I know it will not be a holiday as we know it, but I sincerely hope that all our families can enjoy some quality time together.



Helen Price
Executive Headteacher