

Open Academy Closure and Contingency Planning.

Reasons for current closure.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

In a general workplace the chances of so many staff having this particular group of conditions is difficult to estimate. At Open Academy there just happens to be a very large number of staff who fall into these categories, over 50%. As staff are expected to avoid gatherings in confined spaces then it makes it a great challenge to teach in classrooms or have assemblies and do duties. In addition, sadly there is staff absence due to other conditions – the usual bugs that are doing the rounds. These factors combined created chronic shortages that became apparent last week and got worse with the latest advice. Over time our expectation is that government advice will become more nuanced so the situation may change at any point and we will keep our ability to operate safely under review

Parents in our community were looking at the same advice from the government. Many choosing to isolate their children themselves, collecting their children during the day on Monday with a variety of concerns making normal service challenging to say the least

We therefore judge it to be unsafe to try to operate as normal. As and when staffing rise again we can plan to reopen or partially reopen. As parents who work ourselves we know how imperative good information is so we have created this plan which is being shared.

We sent the emails to our community by 4pm last night as we know the need for clear timely communication, however a technical provider hitch slowed this down so that many did not receive the email until much later. We apologise for that but are assured it is now sorted. We will be sharing information earlier in the day where possible. Students should have already received work using a variety of systems. This is so that we are not relying on any one system

It was heartening this morning to see so many of our students coming in to the academy in order to collect work and resources at the times we specified for their safety. The overwhelming response from all parents was positive and encouraging. Students are confident and reassured on how to access their remote learning and it was wonderful to see that so many varied activities had been set to keep our community learning.

Further to Friday's newsletter, outlined below is a range of scenarios which may come in to play over the next few days and weeks

Please note as there has been no change as yet to potential staffing, we remain closed tomorrow Thursday 19th March and will communicate again tomorrow afternoon

Scenario 1: Re-opening

Staffing levels return to normal. The school will reopen the next day. An email will be sent by the principal and put onto our website and via social media by 12 noon the preceding day. All staff and students who are well will return to school and follow the school timetable. The mock exams/Year 10 exams will continue on the next available day, e.g. on the next Wednesday the exams that were scheduled to take place on the next available Wednesday and so on. If there are no catering facilities we will inform you the day before.

Scenario 2: Partial Opening

Staffing levels return to a place where the school can partially open. Here the staff and students will follow a bespoke timetable dependent upon available staffing see **Examples 1 and 2.**

- Lunch will not be provided please bring packed lunches.
- When the academy reopens then the doors will be open between 8:30 and 9:00. After that staff will not be deployed in reception. Students will not be able to arrive late.
- Year 10 and 13 exams will take place in the hall. These will fit around the lessons as much as is possible.
- Work will be set for year groups not in the academy using the procedures we have put in place.

Example 1

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Sixth Form
Monday		Yes		Yes	Lessons will go ahead as normal. Where a member of staff is absent then students will be provided with work to do in the building as a normal cover lesson.	
Tuesday			Yes			
Wednesday	Yes		Yes			
Thursday		Yes		Yes		
Friday	Yes			Yes		

Example 2

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12/13
Monday		Yes		Yes	Yes	
Tuesday			Yes		Yes	
Wednesday	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Thursday		Yes		Yes		Yes
Friday	Yes			Yes		Yes

Scenario 3: Minimal Opening

Staffing levels remain critical. We are advised to open for students whose parents work in the police, NHS, and in social care only. According to our records there would be no more than 20 pupils in each year group. The school would be closed for students aged 14 and over. They would attend a bespoke curriculum

Work will be set for year groups not in the academy using the procedures we have put in place.

Scenario 4: Instructed to close

The government closes all schools. We will continue setting work via various platforms using the current arrangements that we have operating unless advised otherwise.

Further information

Communication: With all of the above scenarios, we will endeavour to inform you of our decision as soon as it is made and communicate it before 4pm the day before our status is due to change

Public Examinations: We are planning that public exams, GCSEs and A-levels are taking place as normal. If the government changes this we will respond and update you accordingly.

Options Evening: Should the school be closed for options evening it will be rescheduled. The students will get their chance to choose as soon as we are able.

Parents' Evening: Should the school be closed for a parents' evening it will be rescheduled.

Once again my apologies for our decision and look forward to a swift improvement in our circumstances as an Academy and community. Below is a reflection from Mark our Chaplain.

Jon Ford Principal

During times like these, encouragement is important in our lives. Encouragement is a gift we can give to others that doesn't cost anything. Wherever we find ourselves, we can get alongside others and be there for one another. We can comfort, empathise or remotely pick up the phone and just talk. When we give encouragement, it takes away our fears, lifts our eyes off our situations and makes our spirits light. The Bible is full of encouragement and mentions "do not be afraid, do not fear and don't be troubled" many many times. It's hard not to fear at present with shop shelves empty and super markets queued out of the doors, wondering what's happening next. But, Jesus is described as being the prince of peace and he is with us bringing and will bring the comfort that we all need.

Everything is going to be all right.

You are all in my thoughts and prayers
God bless you

Mark