

Dear Parent/Carer

We wrote to you yesterday informing you that we were **suspending classes tomorrow, Friday 20th March 2020** to support our teaching staff and tutors in the preparation of online materials and remote learning, should this be needed, with an expectation that we would recommence face to face teaching next week. **That is still correct.**

Since writing that letter you will be well aware of the announcement made by the Government last night. As a community we have found ourselves in unprecedented times. We know only too well that we exist as a College to realise the ambitions of our community and that we do an incredible job.

It is therefore with a heavy heart, and following those Government guidelines that we will **suspend face to face teaching and move predominately to a 'Virtual College' position, with our learning and support coming via Google Classrooms and Moodle from Monday 23rd March 2020 until further notice.**

This means that the building and all facilities within it will not be available to the majority of our student body, including 16-18, Adults, Apprenticeships and HE. It also means that the majority of staff will also commence working from home on Monday 23rd March 2020.

However, as you know we are also being asked to ensure that we remain open for a discreet group of learners whose parents are deemed key workers in our national and local fight against this virus.

We envisage that the majority of our post 16 students will access their learning online. Nonetheless, we will be offering access to the college for those students whose parents are identified as key workers if required.

In addition, we will be offering a safe learning environment for students identified as 'looked after children' and students with EHCPs.

To facilitate this and provide somewhere for these students, we will be staffing some parts of our college including our libraries/LRCs to ensure access to online learning at all three campuses for these students.

In addition, there will also be a number of business-critical staff continuing to work at all three campuses.



Mike Gaston, Principal & CEO

HSDC

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You will have heard the announcement regarding exams, but we still are awaiting details regarding proxies including the use of teacher assessment and course work within a set of rules to be announced. I believe this supports our belief that we are still **'open for learning'** and that students need to continue engaging in the process with us to support any teacher assessment and/or predicted grades that may be utilised.

In addition, there will still be some exams, particularly in Functional Skills, taking place next week which at this stage I am stating will continue to be available.

We would therefore ask that you do encourage your son or daughter to continue to be involved in Moodle or Google Classroom to continue their studies.

We will keep you updated as more details are available . We know you and our students will have many, many questions for us about the implications for courses. We will be in contact with you as soon as we possibly can with any detail but in the meantime please ensure you keep looking at our website for up to date information.

We will endeavour to do everything we can to continue to serve our students.

Your understanding and support is hugely appreciated at this time.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Gaston", with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Mike Gaston

Principal & CEO

