



# Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

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Dear Parents/Carers

I am writing to update you on the actions we are continuing to take with regards to the Coronavirus outbreak and explain how I think Primary SAT levels, GCSEs and A level grades will be awarded this Summer.

## **Update on Trust Actions**

At this point, all schools in the Trust remain open for vulnerable children and those who are children of key front line workers. We have largely suspended the curriculum, but there are planned learning activities in place for the children that attend school. We have created a staff rota and hope to be able to keep most schools open over the Easter holiday period, as well as during the normal term time. For those children now at home, all schools have set work for them to complete. Please encourage your children do this work for 3 important reasons:

- 1) We would like to try and avoid children currently in school being deprived of their educational entitlement. It would be a great shame if as adults, children in the school system now, have missed out on key opportunities to learn new knowledge or skills, which they may need later on in life.
- 2) There is a likelihood that schools will be closed for a long period of time. This means children will be at home and therefore, establishing a routine of learning for families and children will be really important for the mental health of all of us.
- 3) When the system of schooling returns to normality, children will be expected to sit examinations. Those who have tried to complete work at home and kept themselves mentally alert will be better prepared than those who have opted out.

I appreciate that some of the learning will be difficult for children to understand or access. We are doing our utmost to set sensible and accessible tasks, but clearly we will not get this right all of the time. The challenge for children with special educational needs will be particularly acute of course and we simply ask that these children try their best and if all else fails, engage in reading. Reading can of course, be about all manner of topics from science to history, etc. through to school-set reading books and novels.

Following further guidance regarding the washing of clothes children will be permitted to attend school without their uniform. It is thought that the virus can survive on clothes for a number of days therefore, regular washing of clothing at the end of each school day is advised.

We are hoping that at some point in the near future, we may be able to video our own teachers undertaking lessons for children to view on-line. When we have found a way to do this reliably, we will contact you to explain how this will work.

## **Year 6, Year 11 and Year 13 end of key stage tests and examinations.**

The government has published some details about how test and examination levels/grades will be assigned to pupils given the cancellation of statutory testing and exams. The government will be asking for predicted grades/levels, **but have made it clear that they will seek to triangulate information from schools based on the prior attainment of pupils and the work they have produced to date – e.g mock GCSE exams.**





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As an example, if a pupil in year 11 has a school predicted grade submitted of a 9 for Maths (equivalent to the old A\* grade), but they had a level 4 in their maths SAT at primary and a grade 3 in their mock, **it is likely that the predicted grade of the school will be moderated down, maybe to a grade 4 or 5.** It is for this reason that I have asked all staff to continue setting work for Years 6, 11 and 13 so that they can produce evidence of their aptitude. Additionally, the government have also said that pupils in Years 11 and 13 will be able to sit an exam if they believe the grade they have been awarded is too low. Again, this is another good reason to keep working, along with the points noted above.

Those students in Year 11 and Year 13 who are undertaking **BTEC or similar vocational qualifications** are likely to have a grade awarded on the work completed to date, along with teacher predictions and prior attainment assessment. This means the examinations and assignments pupils have completed so far will be used. Therefore, pupils **must** continue to work on their assignments in order to achieve the best possible outcome.

Universities have said they will be understanding about results and the admissions timetable will remain as it has been in the past. Further details about this process will be released soon.

In summary, for all sorts of educational and mental health reasons, children should in all circumstances, continue to work as much as they possibly can. This will also help them to maintain a rhythm and ethos of work, ready for their return to school, an apprenticeship, sixth form or university.

As a final point, we will continue to run a skeleton staff in all schools for the coming 2 weeks. If you are concerned about anything at all and think we can help, please do contact us by phone or email using the usual methods for your child's school. We will also be contacting those families who we consider the **most** vulnerable on a weekly basis, to ensure children are safe and engaged as much as possible in on-line lessons.

Once again, thank you for your continued support.

Alun Williams  
CEO

Latest Public Health Guidance – 22<sup>nd</sup> March:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-people-with-confirmed-or-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

