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**THE HART  
SCHOOL**  
*Creative  
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Dear Parents, Carers and Students

### **Easter message from the Principal**

It has now been over two weeks since life as we knew it changed, no more so than at The Hart School, as the doors closed, except for a small number of students.

Such a dramatic change to our working is now well underway, and I wanted to write and share with you the actions we took at the time, and will continue to take and how, as a school, we have responded to the Covid-19 situation.

I also want to recognise and acknowledge the community spirit which over recent weeks has been in abundance at The Hart School and has led to what I can only describe as a strong 'connectivity' between the school and its stakeholders, parents, students, staff and the wider community.

Firstly, we were well prepared for the news of school closure. It had been widely shared amongst the nation that school closure was inevitable.

More specifically, once the news broke about Year 11 and Year 13 and the decision not to take examinations, we started to think about what that would mean for the school, and most importantly our students.

For all those students who were about to embark on their examinations, we all want to express and recognize the importance of making such a decision. We were all 'gutted' for you: five years of work should culminate in many celebrations of examination success and clear next steps in peoples' lives.

**Whilst we have a clearer understanding of how grades will be calculated, I want all our students, especially in both these year groups, to know that your teachers know you best and we hope that your results will acknowledge and represent your work undertaken during your five and seven years and, as importantly, you can make choices about what happens next.**

**Under no circumstances can there be any contact or discussions between parents, students and staff until grades are released. We shared with parents the latest government news at the end of last week.**

**I know that this isn't the case for other subjects, in particular BTEC subjects, such as Dance, Drama, ICT, Health & Social Care, Sport and Business. We are still awaiting advice from government about how grades will be arrived at. As soon as information is released, we will let you know. Our advice in the meantime is to continue any coursework that you can.**



Certainly, prior to school closure, we had large numbers of students expressing an interest in attending our excellent Sixth Form and we look forward to seeing many of you in the foreseeable future, as well as saluting all the Year 13 students who will have gone to their university of choice, or, will have taken a different route.

At the time of the announcement to close, we worked with our Directors of Faculty and teaching staff to create a 'remote learning' platform. As a result of tremendous hard work from staff, students can access 'normal' school work remotely. This is important because, through completing learning activities, our students can continue to make progress. In many instances, and especially in English, maths and science, work is marked and assessed on line, offering students virtual feedback. This is true for other subjects as well. Can I say a huge well done to the very many students who are positively engaging in their work and thank parents and carers for your support in helping and providing space for your child to complete school work.

We know, however, there are certain subjects where work has been completed, such as Art and Design where it has not been possible to assess and view students' work. We will, upon return, find spaces in the school to display work, so that the excellent work of students is showcased.

The school remains open during Easter, including Good Friday and Easter Monday and I want to thank staff for volunteering their services and supporting our young people. It is a sign of our staff's commitment when 50 volunteer within minutes of being asked!

During this period, the school has also provided family style Easter projects, to be completed at home. If needed, I hope families find these fun to do!

School work for all years is now complete for the two weeks following Easter. This can be accessed via the school's Remote Learning Portal via the website.

If there are any questions relating to work, you can speak directly to a member of the senior team during the normal school day or contact us on [remotelearning@hartschool.org.uk](mailto:remotelearning@hartschool.org.uk).

Alternatively, for other enquiries, please contact [enquiries@hartschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@hartschool.org.uk); there is always a member of the administration team who deals with these general enquiries throughout the school day.

Keeping in contact with students has been one of our key priorities during school closure and to that end I want to thank the pastoral teams and students who have supported this. On a regular basis, often daily and weekly, students and form tutors have been in contact via school email.

The purpose of maintaining contact is to keep in touch, so that we can offer any additional support with their learning and to make sure, as importantly, that they are well in themselves during this particularly odd time in all our lives.

Our Safeguarding team, a constant presence in school, continue to support our children who are more vulnerable and those who require additional contact and help.

We have received positive feedback from parents and carers about the way in which we have organised work for students and had regular contact: thanks to all teaching staff, form tutors and tutees for making this happen.



We can do better however! As we now enter our next phase of learning, can I ask every student to make sure they check their school emails, so that we know that you are safe and learning. This is extremely important. Parents and carers, can you help us and help them by checking that they are doing this please.

Through this time, it is also important that we continue to meet as a school community. To this end, all school teams, pastoral, faculty and leadership meet regularly virtually.

We also meet with Creative Education Trust senior directors weekly so that, as principals, we are aware of the national picture and can respond appropriately. Our continuous review of the Covid-19 situation and its relevance to our school will, I hope, provide reassurance for all our parents and carers.

A few final thoughts...

The Hart School is a school within the heart of its community and never has such a statement been so true. I particularly want to thank the 'stellar' Stella, our catering manager, who comes in daily and provides hot meals for our students and staff. We all look forward to the next day's culinary delight! We cannot thank her enough.

And finally, many thanks to Miss Sandham; Ms. Dosanjh; Mrs Lewis; Mr Butterworth and Mr Rushden who have been making protective facial masks for key workers across the region and beyond. Using our Design resources and equipment, staff have come together to support those in the front line.

The first batch of face shields were delivered to our local GPs and care homes in Rugeley who were clearly in desperate need!

We have also managed to secure donations from local companies to manufacture a further 1000 face shields including packaging and preparing a further 200 shields ready for assembly tomorrow.

In a situation which is keeping us apart and disconnecting us from everything which is familiar, The Hart School and its community have never been so closely aligned and connected. There is a togetherness, a spirit which should also be applauded.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

We will all be together again.

Yours sincerely

**Mr C Keen**  
Principal