



October 2020

Ref: KM/DIH

Year 7 Academy Closure
Monday, 19 October to Friday, 23 October

Dear Families,

As you will no doubt be aware Sandwell is currently classed as a High-Risk area according to the government's new three-tiered Covid Alert system. As I stated in my previous letter, Shireland students and staff have responded very well to the restrictions. Subsequently we have only had 5 positive tests amongst the student body, and these have all been community or family infections and have not been transmitted across the School.

However, one of the consequences of the Track and Trace system is that I have a large number of staff who must self-isolate due to contact with someone who has tested positive. This means that staff will be out of the Academy for 14 days. We have managed this by using supply staff and asking Shireland staff to teach outside their allocation. At present I have 14% of my staff self-isolating and this is placing a huge strain on my ability to place our own staff in classes to teach our students.

Consequently, having taken advice from our Trust, we have had to make the difficult decision to close year 7 for one week starting on Monday, 19 October 2020.

Students will continue to receive education remotely delivered by Year 7 staff and students will have this process explained to them over the next few days. This will be very similar to the process that we delivered during our transition programme in the summer. We will be using a combination of Microsoft Teams and paper-based work that will be given to students to take home on Friday. Students will then begin their half term holiday on Friday, 23 October at 3:10pm. There will be no lessons over the half term holiday.

Next half-term, we will be undertaking an assessment process to identify gaps in learning. This is necessary as we have not had any data from SATs this year as they did not take place. As you know, Shireland Collegiate Academy is focused on combining digital tools and technology to get the best outcomes for all students. We are excited to introduce digital GL assessments to Year 7 which will help us shape your child's learning as we get a powerful insight into their abilities in English, Mathematics and Science, their spelling, reading and comprehension skills and their feelings about themselves and school.

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SHIRELAND
COLLEGIATE ACADEMY TRUST

Registered Office:
Waterloo Road
Smethwick
B66 4ND



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Please be assured that these assessments will only be completed when we feel it is right for our students and we are using them to enable a smooth transition back to school after a period of absence. The benefits of these assessments are extremely wide-ranging. We can personalise teaching, implement a range of interventions, support and challenge appropriately, whilst growing student aspirations. We acknowledge that this is a unique experience for our students and feel this is a great tool to help them back into learning.

Whilst I understand that the closure will cause a degree of complications for families, I know that you will understand that these are difficult times for all families, including the families of staff who are having to self-isolate through no fault of their own. We would not take this course of action unless it was completely necessary. Following half-term, if the situation does not improve then we will rotate year group closures through other year groups.

Many thanks for your continued support. We look forward to welcoming Year 7 students back into the Academy on Monday, 2 November 2020.

Kind regards,



Mr D Irish
Principal

WE **MUST** KEEP ON
PROTECTING EACH OTHER



HANDS



FACE



SPACE



**STAY ALERT TO
THE SYMPTOMS**

**HIGH TEMPERATURE OR
NEW CONTINUOUS COUGH OR
LOSS OF TASTE OR SMELL?**



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nhs.uk/coronavirus

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Leading Learning

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