

Embed confidence; fuel ambition.

7 March 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

Thank you for your patience with the disruption to the school opening as a result of the severe weather conditions and then again this week with the water problems. I also apologise for the inconvenience the enforced closures will have caused you.

The decision to close a school is never made lightly and is always a last resort. My decision to close the school last Wednesday, Thursday and Friday was made after consultation with Leeds City Council and other local schools as well as our facilities management company, Mitie. As you will be aware, we have a duty of care to ensure the safety of all our students and staff whilst on the school premises and, although we took every precaution to ensure the site was safe, it was felt that, after almost hourly risk assessments and constant monitoring of the weather forecast, we were unable to guarantee students' and staff safety. Therefore, it was necessary to close the school.

Amongst the many considerations when making the decision to close the school is the need to give parents/carers as much information and notice as possible. I would particularly like to apologise for the late decision to close the school on Wednesday. I fully intended to open the school on Wednesday but a sudden deterioration in the weather conditions around 8.00am combined with the fact that many staff were unable to get into school (some of whom travel a considerable distance to get to work) meant that it was not safe for me to open the school. On Wednesday evening, all Headteachers in Leeds were asked by Leeds City Council to make an early decision, to give parents and carers as much notice as possible, if they were to close on Thursday. Some schools decided on Wednesday evening to close on Thursday. Again, I was keen to open the school if at all possible, which is why the decision was delayed until Thursday morning. After heavy snow for most of the night and freezing temperatures, it was obvious that the school site was not safe and many of our staff had indicated that they were unable to get into work. A text was sent as early as the system allows to inform you of our closure. After several site assessments during the day on Friday; consultation with other local Headteachers; and after taking advice from our facilities management team, I decided to close the school on Friday and communicate with staff and parents/carers on Thursday evening in order to avoid any dangerous and unnecessary travel in the morning.

As a result of the continued low temperature, our water pipes froze, causing an electrical fault in our water pump. As we had no running water, I had no option but to close the school early on Monday. We were unable to re-open on Tuesday for health and safety reasons.

Our priority for the rest of this week is to make sure that the lost learning time is caught up and that we are able to get back to normal.

Yesterday, we uploaded a comprehensive package of catch up activities to our website for Years 7 to 11. We will be working with students to ensure these are completed. We shall also arrange extra lessons for exam classes after school and during the end of term holiday.

There are also changes to the published calendar for this week:

Year 11 mock English exam will now take place on Wednesday 7 March and the **mock maths exam will be on Thursday 8 March**. The arrangements for these exams will remain the same; the exams will start at 8.45am and students need to be in school at the usual time of 8.30am.

We will now celebrate **World Book Day on Thursday 8 March** with the same arrangements in place as before. Students are welcome to dress up as their favourite book character, if they have pre-registered their intent to do so with their tutor. It is **not** a general non-uniform day.

There will also be a chance to swap a book at lunch time at our **Book Swaps** on Thursday 8 and Friday 9 March 2018.

Our **Community Read** continues **today, Thursday and Friday** this week so students will be able to tell you what happens to Friedrich at the end of the day on Friday.

As a reminder, our **Year 10 Parents' Evening** will take place on **Thursday 15 March between 5.00pm and 7.00pm**. Your child will be asked to make appointments with their teachers this week and next. If you are unable to attend the event, please do let Mrs Parker (Head of Year 10) know and she will arrange for your child's teacher to pass on important information to you.

This week is also our **Confidence Week** where students will be given the opportunity during their lessons to reflect on and consolidate their learning. There will be regular updates on how our students use this time on Twitter - [@lawnschool](https://twitter.com/lawnschool).

I will write again on Friday with my usual Headteacher's Update.

Yours faithfully



Mrs J Bell
Headteacher