

5th January 2021

Dear Parent,

I am writing to you today following the government announcement made at 8pm Monday 4th January. As a parent I understand first-hand the disruption and difficulties caused by this announcement and am resolute to make sure we do everything we can to keep our community safe and our students learning. With the announcement of a 3rd national lockdown and school closures, I would like to try and further clarify the implications for our students and community. As of today, Tuesday 5th January the UTC building is closed to most students. The exception is for the children of critical workers and those considered vulnerable*. You can find the latest definitions here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

We anticipate that this lockdown will end in February with students not likely to be able to return to on site provision until Monday February 22nd. Learning will however continue for all our students remotely via Microsoft Teams, we are trying our utmost to have this operational ASAP and lessons will be fully in place by Monday 11th January. Whilst Mr Johnson alluded to disruption to the summer exam series 'we recognise that this will mean it is not possible or fair for all exams to go ahead this summer as normal', we are yet to understand what this truly means. We will be continuing to guide all our learners to be ready for the summer examination series. We will update parents and students as soon as further information and detail is confirmed, including details of any examinations.

Please use the UTC website to keep informed about all the latest resources and information that is available <https://www.southbank-utc.co.uk/>.

I have included a timetable for our learners that we would like all students to adhere to during this lockdown. It has been carefully considered and it involves our learners being actively engaged for 3 hours 40 minutes each day, as a minimum expectation. For students in key stage 4 we have deliberately placed the focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics, and science, ensuring that each is delivered daily. For students in key Stage 5 the focus remains on preparation for A-levels and the completion of the BTEC assignments and should be completed during the 3 sessions during each day.

Teachers will be providing regular lessons available via Microsoft Teams and will typically involve narrated PowerPoint lesson and activity that will be turned in via Teams. Staff will be available via the chat and call function during the lesson to support learners. In addition to teachers providing lessons, we will have a core team of colleagues calling to regularly check in with students and help deal with any pastoral or support issues. I have included a contact list of emergency staff details that can be used to access support during lock down.

If your child is eligible for Free School Meals, we will be supporting this via a voucher scheme with Wonde. These operate via email and you will be sent a voucher and code to use online or in store and several supermarkets. Please let us know if you require any support with this.

The symptoms of Covid-19 remain; high temperature, persistent cough and/or a sudden loss or change in sense of taste or smell. Please be vigilant and seek a test should you be displaying symptoms. The website <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> is a useful source of help and guidance or call 111. Please inform the UTC of any positive test results as even during lockdown as we must keep track of cases. Please contact Kim Field kim.field@southbank-utc.co.uk in the first instance.

Lockdown's are difficult for everyone and young people as such I should like to remind everyone about the Kooth.com resource that provides online support for young people. Kooth is a web based confidential support service available to young people. Kooth provides a safe and secure means of accessing mental health and wellbeing support designed specifically for young people.

Kooth offers young people the opportunity to have a text-based conversation with a qualified counsellor. Counsellors are available from 12 noon to 10 pm on weekdays and 6pm to 10 pm at weekends, every day of the year on a drop-in basis. Young people can access regular booked online counselling sessions as needed. Outside counselling hours' young people can message our team and get support by the next day. When students register with Kooth they will have support available to them now and in the future. Support can be gained not only through counselling but articles, forums, and discussion boards. All content is age appropriate, clinically approved and fully moderated. To find out more visit www.Kooth.com and it is available via the App store or Google play. You can also contact Childline, which you can contact by phone, 0800 1111 or through the website childline.org.uk

Lambeth council can provide extensive support to families during lockdown and further information can be found here: <https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19>

I will endeavour to keep everyone up to date with the latest information available, please do reach out if you require any support.

Stay Safe

Regards



Austin Sheppard
Principal