



Woodside High School

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4th June 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

My sincere thanks for your support in the difficult decision we had to take to close the school on Tuesday 4th and Wednesday 5th June. I appreciate it was short notice and the inconvenience that causes to families. Closing the school is never our preferred option and we take significant steps throughout the year to avoid this wherever possible. We had tried to be proactive and when we were aware how significantly we would be affected by staff taking time for religious observance, we made the decision to close on Wednesday and notified parents and carers with as much notice as possible.

As you know, Eid was declared late afternoon on Monday to be starting on Tuesday, rather than Wednesday, and we were put in an impossible situation with the scheduling of five GCSE examinations by the exam board on Tuesday 4th June and three examinations on Wednesday 5th June that we had no control over. The staffing required in order to run the examinations for Year 11 is considerable and we had to prioritise the health and safety of all of our students. The reason for closure is due to health and safety reasons and the fact that we are unable to run the school and the GCSE examinations safely with the number of staff who are taking leave of absence. The decision was not taken lightly and we did look at every possible option to keep the school open and still be able to run the GCSE exams.

At Woodside we pride ourselves on being able to offer all students a quality education - in fact we were open for students throughout every holiday so far this year and each evening for extra study. I hope it is clear that our staff are absolutely committed to our students' education and this decision was only made because we could see no alternative.

We have, like other schools, contacted JCQ and Ofqual to raise our concern that the core GCSE examinations were scheduled during Eid this year.

My thanks to the many of you who reached out to express your support. I feel truly grateful to be part of such a supportive community.

Yours sincerely,

G. Robinson

Gerry Robinson
Head Teacher

Head Teacher: Ms Gerry Robinson

