

16th March 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Coronavirus Update

You will all be aware of the escalation in the coronavirus pandemic over the last few days. This is clearly worrying and everyone including parents, staff and pupils will understandably be concerned.

Please be assured that we will continue to follow the detailed advice received from the Department for Education and Public Health England and the risk to children and young people remains very low.

In order to reduce risks, we have told pupils that they must:

1. Wash their hands regularly and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds. They must now do this:
 - Just before setting off from home.
 - As soon as possible on arrival to school.
 - Before eating.
 - Immediately when they arrive home.
2. Not touch their face, particularly around the mouth, nose or eyes.
3. Report directly to Reception if they exhibit a high temperature and/or a new and persistent cough in school. Pupils will then be placed in isolation until parents can collect them.

If your child is showing signs of illness, specifically a high temperature and/or a new, continuous cough, then the advice is to stay at home and self-isolate for 7 days <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

If you have think you might have the Covid-19 virus please go to <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>.

Current guidance for those needing to self-isolate can be found at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-advice/>

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You should:

- Try to keep at least 2 metres (3 steps) from other people in your home, particularly older people or those with long-term health conditions.
- Ask friends and family and delivery services to deliver things like food shopping and medicines – but avoid contact with them.
- Sleep alone if possible.
- Regularly wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Try to stay away from older people and those with long-term health conditions.
- Drink plenty of water and take everyday painkillers, such as paracetamol and ibuprofen, to help with your symptoms.

Please remember, for self-isolation, you should not leave the house for the entire 7 day period.

In addition to the guidance, I have decided to change our normal patterns of working to promote social distancing and hygiene. I believe that these are sensible and proportionate precautions to ensure that I have done everything possible to protect our pupils and staff. These changes are now in place and will remain so until further notice.

1. Class teachers and tutors have carefully explained how pupils can keep themselves safe, using the following information: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51711227>. **Please reinforce this with your children at home.**
2. There will be no assemblies in school, including our weekly primary phase celebration assembly. We will now communicate information to pupils through their class teacher or tutor instead.
3. There will be no staff meetings or briefings in school and communication with staff will now be through email.
4. There will be no parent evenings. You will however receive their reports as normal.
5. Our school is already cleaned to a high standard, but additional deep cleaning has been introduced, including of door handles, keyboards, mice and hard surfaces.
6. In the primary and secondary phase, at break time, pupils will now consume their food outside.
7. In the secondary phase, at lunchtime, pupils will not be allowed to queue. Instead, they will attend the dining room at the times below and enter straight away.
 - Year 7: 12:20pm (only pupils having lunch in the dining room to be released from lessons at this time)
 - Year 11: 12.35pm
 - Year 10: 12:45pm
 - Year 9: 12:55pm
 - Year 8: 13:05 pm

Chairs in the dining room will be spaced further away from each other to promote social distancing.

8. In the primary phase, children will have their lunch at slightly different times and chairs in the dining room will be spaced further away from each other to promote social distancing.
9. All visits and sports fixtures for pupils are cancelled.

Lessons will continue as normal.

It is possible that the school may need to close over the coming weeks, either partially or fully. If this is needed, we will let you know through our normal communication systems, including text, email and on our website. In the event of a partial closure, we will prioritise continuing lessons for pupils in Year 11, 10 and 6. We will also set detailed work for pupils who are told not to attend school. At our secondary phase, this will be through:

1. Insight, as we do for homework now.
2. GCSEpod for pupils in Years 9-11. All pupils in these year groups must log in to GCSEpod this week to check that it is working for them. If there are any issues, please ask your child to go to Reception and we can re-set their account.
3. Completing work in Office 365 and using Microsoft Teams to see video lessons. These initiatives are currently under development and further details will be issued in due course.

At our primary phase, work will be sent to parents using the school email and text system.

Examination Boards are advising that GCSEs will continue as normal, and it is important that pupils are re-assured about this. If the situation were to change, Examination Boards would ensure that pupils are not adversely affected. For example, alternative admission arrangements would be put in place, so that their prospects for a college or sixth form place would not be jeopardised.

If pupils need to self-isolate, please call the school to let us know, and we will authorise absence for the required number of days. If their condition then improves, pupils can return to school at the end of their isolation period. If their condition worsens, you should contact 111 for further advice and then let us know when convenient.

Please be assured that we will continue to do everything we can to ensure that risks are minimised.

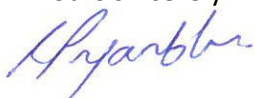
Whilst the situation is obviously concerning, I trust that you are re-assured by our actions.

As a school and a community we are very good at looking after each other and I am sure that this will continue in these difficult times.

We will update you of any further changes by letter, email and through our website.

Take care.

Yours sincerely



Robert Martlew
Headteacher and CEO