

11 March 2020

Dear Parents/Carers

RE: Coronavirus Update 11/3/2020

In what continues to be a rapidly changing and serious picture we would like to update you on the schools current position and plans going forward for a range of scenarios that might develop.

School Attendance:

The government guidance remains unchanged that there is no reason not to continue attending school if you are fit and well and have not recently travelled to identify specific areas. Our overall attendance figures over the last month have remained at a good level and I would like to thank you for your ongoing support. The situation remains that we have no cases of Coronavirus associated with the school.

You only need to stay away from public places (self-isolate) if advised to by the 111 online coronavirus service or a medical professional. You should use this service if:

- you think you might have coronavirus
- in the last 14 days you've been to a country or area with a high risk of coronavirus – see our [coronavirus advice for travellers](#)
- you've been in close contact with someone with coronavirus

NHS online Link: [Use the 111 coronavirus service](#)

School Closure:

There is the possibility in the future that the government might decide to close schools as part of their containment and delay strategy. If this were to happen we have systems in place and more detailed information ready to be sent out to parents, staff and students. This will explain how students and staff can continue to access and deliver learning.

We will do this through google classroom which every student already uses and provides online subject specific classes taken from their timetable. Students will be expected to follow their timetables from home by logging into their subject classroom online at their normal lesson times. Their teacher will be able to message students with tasks, resources and the help they need to complete appropriate learning. Students will be able to log in with their iPads, a home computer or any smart phone.

School trips:

We currently have a number of trips planned over the coming months for which all or partial payments have been made by parents. No school trip will go ahead if the national advice indicates the safety and welfare of students and staff would be at risk. This advice comes from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

Our current overseas trips are; Morocco, which is fully paid, Sorrento (Y9) and Normandy (Y7) for which we have paid the majority of the costs and China (Y8 MEP) for which we are yet to make any financial payments to operators outside of school

Our school insurance will refund any trip that has to be cancelled due to advice from the FCO which indicates no travel or essential travel only should take place to that country or area. If such advice does not exist for a destination it is expected the trip will run. Under these circumstances if a parent decides they wish to remove their child from the trip then this is described as 'disinclination to travel' and is not covered by insurance. Parents do not have a right to refund under these circumstances.

The majority of our planned trips are at the end of June or later and if there are outstanding payments for them we ask that parents continue to make these. Trips are often a real highlight of a student's time at school and bring invaluable alternative learning and experiences. The situation may change significantly by that time and it is important we are able to go ahead with these opportunities for students if it is safe to do so.

Exam preparation and Ofqual advice from the Department for Education:

We recognise that students, parents and teachers will be concerned about the possible impact of coronavirus on the 2020 summer exam series. Ofqual's advice at this time is to continue to prepare for exams and other assessments as normal.

Ofqual continues to work closely with exam boards, other regulators and the Department for Education to plan for a range of scenarios, as the public would expect. Our overriding priorities are fairness to students this summer and keeping disruption to a minimum.

It is still many weeks until exams start and the government will issue updated advice if necessary, giving schools and colleges as much notice as possible.

The latest updates from Ofqual can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/updated-statement-on-coronavirus>

Preventing the spread of infection:

We all have a role to play in preventing the spread of infection and have detailed below the standard advice from NHS England. There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

There are general principles anyone can follow to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- washing your hands often - with soap and water, or use alcohol sanitiser if handwashing facilities are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport
- covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in a bin. See [Catch it, Bin it, Kill it](#)
- see further information on the [Public Health England Blog](#) and the [NHS UK website](#).

Face masks for the general public, pupils or students, or staff are not recommended to protect from infection, as there is no evidence of benefit from their use outside healthcare environments.

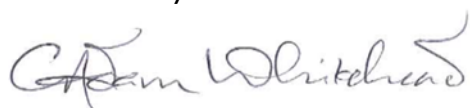
Weblinks for the latest advice from the government are listed below:

Updates on COVID-19: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Guidance for educational settings: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

If you or your child have any further concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office and a member of the leadership team will get back to you if needed.

Yours faithfully



Mr Adam Whitehead (BSc)
Headteacher