

Dear Parents and Carers,

Coronavirus Update

I am writing to you to update you on the ongoing issues presented by the current Coronavirus outbreak. Clearly this is a rapidly changing situation, and we are very grateful for the support and sensible decisions that you as parents and members of the community are making.

The health and safety of all members of the community is our number one priority and as a result we are monitoring and implementing any actions that Government announcements require on a daily basis. It is difficult to predict exactly what will happen in the coming days and weeks but as a school we have plans in place for most eventualities and appreciate your continued support and understanding.

Self isolation guidance:

Below is the latest advice from the government in regard to self isolation

- If you live alone and you have symptoms of coronavirus illness (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home for **7 days** from when your symptoms started. (See [ending isolation](#) section below for more information)
- If you live with others and you or one of them have symptoms of coronavirus, then all household members must stay at home and not leave the house for **14 days**. The 14-day period starts from the day when the first person in the house became ill
- it is likely that people living within a household will infect each other or be infected already. Staying at home for 14 days will greatly reduce the overall amount of infection the household could pass on to others in the community
- for anyone in the household who starts displaying symptoms, they need to stay at home for 7 days from when the symptoms appeared, regardless of what day they are on in the original 14 day isolation period. (See [ending isolation](#) section below for more information)
- if you can, move any vulnerable individuals (such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions) out of your home, to stay with friends or family for the duration of the home isolation period
- if you cannot move vulnerable people out of your home, stay away from them as much as possible
- if you have coronavirus symptoms:
 - do **not** go to a GP surgery, pharmacy or hospital
 - you do not need to contact 111 to tell them you're staying at home
 - testing for coronavirus is not needed if you're staying at home
 - plan ahead and ask others for help to ensure that you can successfully stay at home and consider what can be done for vulnerable people in the household
- ask your employer, friends and family to help you to get the things you need to stay at home
- wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds, each time using soap and water, or use hand sanitiser
- if you feel you cannot cope with your symptoms at home, or your condition gets worse, or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days, then use the [NHS 111 online](#) coronavirus service. If you do not have internet access, call NHS 111. For a medical emergency dial 999

Reporting Absence for any student, including those who are immunocompromised and high risk:

Please follow our school absence procedure and state whether your child is unwell, is self isolated as a household member or isolating due to being high risk and adopting social distancing.

Information on high risk categories can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

Dealing with Staff shortages:

As the number of staff and their families affected by the outbreak increases we might be faced with the need to partially close the school in order to redirect the work of healthy staff on site. We will do this by suspending lessons for named year groups. In this eventuality parents will be informed by email that they will need to keep their child at home. Work of about two hours each will be set in core subjects (English, Maths and Science) through google classrooms for them to complete during the day. If necessary, closures will be rolling and not involve Y11.

As of today our staffing levels indicate that we will need to partially close for the rest of this week as outlined below. Each year will be absent for the one day indicated:

- Year 10 are not expected in school on Wednesday 18th March
- Y9 are not expected in school on Thursday 19th March
- Y8 are not expected in school on Friday 20th March

We will send a separate message with more detail however if a year group are not in school they will be expected to be indoors at home working on the tasks set. We appreciate your support of this measure and will keep you informed of arrangements for next week.

Whole School Closure:

We have clear strategies for dealing with a full closure and I have met with staff to go through our contingency plans should we need to set work remotely. It is critical that all students have school emails and google drive set up on their smartphones, iPads or home computers for ease of access. They also need to ensure they have login details for the google suite. We will use lessons and tutor time over the coming days to practise with students how lessons will run if there is an extended closure. Documentation for students will be shared with you should this eventuality occur and we are clear that full participation in remote learning is an expectation we have for all students who are well. If you will have difficulty accessing online provision please could we ask that you contact the office so that alternatives can be discussed and agreed.

Overseas Trips:

We know that cancelling trips will be very disappointing for students but we are clear it is a necessary step to keep staff and students as safe as possible. Following advice from the Foreign and Commonwealth office we have already cancelled our overseas trips to Morocco and China and are in the process of claiming insurance and making refunds to parents.

The government has given no timeframe to the suspension of overseas trips and travel agents and insurance companies are currently focused on immediate bookings. This means we cannot yet make a definitive decision and begin a claims procedure for Sorrento and Normandy although we believe that cancellation is the most likely outcome and will keep you informed. Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter.

School trips, clubs, fixtures and events:

All school clubs, fixtures and events are temporarily suspended. This includes any upcoming parent's evenings, performances, and inter-school matches. It also includes all Friday afternoon activities meaning all students will be expected to leave site at 1:40 on Fridays until further notice.

Last night we made the decision to cancel the trip to Marwell Zoo following the government's press conference. Again we will be looking at our insurance cover for this and value your patience whilst it is resolved. All other school trips until after Easter are cancelled and we have suspended our June ERA week planning at this time so that we can be responsive to any medium term guidance as the outbreak develops..

GCSE Examinations:

We understand that many parents and students will be concerned, as we are, about the summer examinations. The government is looking at contingency plans for these but as yet nothing has been published. We will of course keep you updated as soon as we can. All students have completed their course content and therefore revision is where their efforts should be focussed.

Students who know they have to complete practical or coursework components e.g. music, art, language orals, should continue to fully prepare for these. Parents and students will be informed the moment there are any developments in this area.

Responding to personal contact emails etc.

We will keep you informed with regular formal update letters as more guidance comes from the authorities. This will potentially take a little time to turn around particularly central announcements that are made outside of school hours. Please be aware that our office team and teaching staff are also heavily involved in developing our contingency plans or might be unwell and therefore may not be able to respond to emails/calls directly or in our usual timeframe as our capacity will be limited.

School closures at Bohunt are a very rare thing but we are facing an unprecedented challenge with the Coronavirus outbreak. Whilst current evidence suggests that young people are generally not too adversely affected by the symptoms, we are conscious that older members of our community and those with underlying health conditions are at much greater risk. It is vital that we all do what we can to mitigate the effect of this virus in the coming weeks and potentially months, and prepare for the full range of possible outcomes we may be forced to take.

Yours faithfully

Adam Whitehead
Headteacher