



## **GARSTANG COMMUNITY ACADEMY**

Bowgreave • Garstang • Lancashire • PR3 1YE • Tel: 01995 603226 • Email:  
info@garstangcommunityacademy.com

11<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I know from my own experience that our children, and we as parents, are all feeling various levels of unease over global events and national news and information. With this in mind, I thought I would try to clarify one or two things from our point of view at school, based on some regularly asked questions:

**1. Should I send my child to school?**

Yes - If your child is free from travel or symptom restrictions (see below – number 2) then the advice is that they should be in school, and maintaining high levels of personal hygiene: washing hands regularly and carefully; using their own, or school sanitisers (we have sourced as many of these as we can, and strategically placed them around school); using, and carefully disposing of, tissues if they have runny noses or colds - 'catch it, bin it, kill it'.

**2. When should I not send them in?**

The general answer to this is check the Government advice which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus> and if in **any** doubt, call 111.

**3. Is school going to close?**

No - At the moment there is no reason to believe that we will be advised to close. However, we are, as you would expect, making contingency plans to make sure that we're prepared for any full, or partial, closure eventuality (see below – number 4).

**4. What will happen if school does need to close?**

We are putting plans in place to try to ensure that children can remotely receive as good an education as possible should the need arise. With this in mind, please could you ensure that:

- You are set up to receive email/parentmail/PMX communications.
- You are set up to receive Show My Homework information
- Your child has their log in details for Show My Homework
- Your child has their log in details for normal GCA computer access which they will be able to use to access Office365 via the website (details to follow).
- Your child has access to an electronic device with Internet connection – preferably a computer, but a tablet or even a mobile phone would suffice.

**If the answer to any of these is 'no', please let us know as soon as possible so that we can help to resolve it.**

**5. What about external exams – GCSEs?**

The simple answer is that we don't know and will continue to take advice from the Government and the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), the body which runs public exams. However, we should definitely assume that these will be going ahead, and **Y11 students should continue to work hard to this end.**



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Clearly this is a developing situation and, at the time of writing, the risk to health and the smooth running of the school is deemed low to moderate.

You know your own child best, but together we should:

- Do our best not to sensationalise or overdramatise the issue.
- Steer our children away from some of the news coverage and certainly away from social media channels.
- Talk to our children but stick to known facts rather than speculation, and avoiding passing on our own concerns to our children/pupils.

Our advice to children and staff with suppressed immune systems or specific ongoing health conditions is to seek medical advice. They and their families will know best how to stay safe but we will support these groups as best as we can, taking into account advice from the NHS 111 service and Government sources such as Public Health England.

We cannot predict how this situation will unfold over the coming weeks but we will try to make sure that we communicate effectively to everyone in our wider family.

The overall message is one of **'business as usual'** while remaining vigilant and doing what we can to ensure that any action we take is reasonable, proportionate and based on the latest advice.

If you do have concerns, please follow the advice in number 2 above, or just give us a ring and we'll do what we can.

Yours faithfully

Alasdair Ashcroft  
Headteacher