



18 March 2020

Dear Parents

I am writing with an update on our response to the current situation regarding the corona virus. You will be aware that the latest government advice has changed and is as follows:

- Schools are not directed to close at this point.
- Anyone with a new continuous cough or fever should stay at home for 14 days, as should all members of that household.
- The government is advising all “at risk” groups to implement “social distancing” measures for a period of 12 weeks from next week. At risk groups include those aged over 70, pregnant women and anyone with a serious underlying health condition.

The guidance is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Please refer to this guidance in deciding whether or not your child should attend school. I recognise that these are difficult decisions and we support you in thinking about what is best for your family and the wider community. However, should your child continue to attend school it is vital that they arrive on time to enable us to make adequate staffing arrangements at the start of the day – these decisions have to be based on knowing exact students numbers in the building.

Similarly, we ask for your support more than ever in ensuring that your child meets our expectations regarding behaviour and cooperation with staff at these difficult times. You should expect changes in how we operate in the short term as we try to remain open, including students not having their usual teachers or being in their usual teaching groups and there will undoubtedly be some re-purposing of our schools to help the national effort to slow the spread of the corona virus. It is not acceptable for staff who remain in school to spend time and effort dealing with any students who fail to comply with reasonable instructions. Thank you for reinforcing this message with your child.

We will attempt to keep school open each day in line with government advice and guidance and our desire to do what we can to support our students, families and our community. The starting point for this decision-making each day has to be whether the school has enough staff to enable us to keep children safe. As more staff are required to stay at home either because they or a family member have symptoms or they are in a vulnerable category, we will have fewer staff available and the challenge will inevitably become greater as self-isolation is expected to be between 14 days and 12 weeks.

It is very difficult to provide clarity about what may happen over the coming days and months as we are dealing with a constantly changing situation. However, I would like to share the following:

- We will do everything we can do remain open for all students until instructed to close by the government. However, if we are only able to open on a partial basis due to staffing then will work in priority order in terms of protecting examination year groups in the first instance.
- The assessments that were due to take place next week across all year groups have been cancelled.
- We have provided details in the curriculum section of the school website of online resources that are available for all students who have to work from home.

- We are conscious of doing all we can to prevent those parents who are key workers (e.g. healthcare workers) from having to take time off to look after children.
- We are working on a plan to ensure that those students eligible for school meals will continue to be supported in the event of school closure.

We are working hard to arrive at solutions to the issues above and will update you further as and when we have more information.

I recognise that as we move into a more difficult phase we may all face challenging times as a result. However, I would ask you to remember that staff are doing everything they can right now to try and do the right thing for our students, families and communities, discharging their duties as public servants, often ahead of consideration to themselves and their families. I am very grateful for the support that many of you have shown over the past few days. We will continue to do everything we can to keep you updated and be as honest and open as we can.

With thanks for your support.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Johnson
Headteacher